

Arab leaders congratulate Prince Hassan on son's recovery

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Sunday received cables and phone calls from Arab presidents and emirs as well as senior officials congratulating him on the recovery of His Royal Highness Prince Rashid who had a car accident last Friday. Cables and phonecalls came from Sultan Qaboos Ben Saeed of Oman, Bahraini Emir Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifah, Tunisian President Zein Al Abidine Ben Ali, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz, Bahraini Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad Ben Issa Al Khalifah, Moroccan Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed and other senior Arab officials. Senior Jordanian officials and dignitaries visited Prince Rashid at the Al Hussein Medical Centre.

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Israeli rabbi calls on Syrians to return spy's remains

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, leader of Israel's ultra-Orthodox Sephardic Shas Party, has called on Syria to return the remains of a super-spy lured in Syria in 1965, an Israeli deputy said Sunday. "Rabbi Yosef, whom I met on Sunday, believes that by making such a gesture, President Hafez Assad would show Israeli public opinion that he really wants peace," said Labour deputy Salah Tarif. Mr. Tarif returned to Israel on Friday after an unprecedented week-long visit to Syria with a 50-strong delegation of Israeli-Arabs. Mossad agent Eli Cohen, who managed to infiltrate the upper echelons of the Syrian state and spied for Israel, was hanged in a public square in Damascus despite worldwide appeals for clemency from Pope Paul VI and the heads of the French, Belgian and Canadian governments.

Israeli Labour Party on brink of bankruptcy — press

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's opposition Labour Party has accumulated debts of some \$25 million and will have to make deep cuts in its staff and budget to avert bankruptcy, according to a report published Sunday. The report, drawn up for Labour by a group of attorneys and accountants and published in the Israeli press, said the party's operating budget was barely sufficient to pay interest on its debts and cover the salaries and costs at its Tel Aviv headquarters. Virtually no funds are left over for other political activities, including public campaigns targeting the policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his right-wing coalition government, the report said. It called for the dismissal of dozens of party employees and other cost-cutting measures.

2 soldiers, policeman killed in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Kurdish rebels have killed two soldiers in the southeast of Turkey, state-run Anatolian news agency said Sunday. It said two privates were killed when guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) opened fire on a patrol in the baskale area of van province. It did not say when the attack took place. In a separate incident a policeman was killed by unknown assailants after they stopped a minibus in the northern province of Ordu in the early hours of Sunday, the agency said. Media reports say armed rebels of the PKK have moved into the area in recent months.

Trial of Yemen 'separatists' goes behind closed doors

SANAA (AFP) — A panel judging 15 former southern Yemeni leaders in absentia on charges of "treason" has decided to take the trial behind closed doors to allow the prosecutor to present secret documents. The Sanaa court's presiding judge, Jassir Mohammad Saif, said at the end of a hearing Saturday that from the next day the hearings would be closed until the prosecutor winds up his case. The evidence includes "secret documents," he said. A judicial source said the documents point to foreign backing of the May 1994 secession bid by southern leaders. The defendants declared a short-lived democratic republic of Yemen in the southern provinces. But their attempt was crushed by the northern army loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The trial started in August 1996.

Thousands protest new education law in Turkey

ISTANBUL (AP) — Around 3,000 Islamic demonstrators marched in downtown Istanbul Sunday protesting a new law curbing religious education. The measure was proposed by the staunchly secular military, which sees religious schools as a breeding ground for Islamists. It was approved by parliament Saturday. "No to the military junta. Freedom to education," the demonstrators chanted, leaving a mosque after noon prayers. By increasing compulsory secular education from five to eight years, the new law effectively shuts down the first three years of religious high schools.

Majali pledges free, fair and democratic elections

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Sunday pledged free, fair and democratic parliamentary elections and called on all eligible Jordanian citizens to exercise their right in electing their representatives to the Lower House of Parliament.

In an interview with the Kuwaiti daily Al Rai Al "Amm," published today (Monday), Dr. Majali said elections will take place in a free and democratic atmosphere adding that the government has taken the necessary measures to ensure its integrity. "Should the integrity of elections be contested, then the judiciary will have its final say," he said.

On the possible boycott by the Islamic Action Front (IAF) of the November 4 elections, Dr. Majali said the government believes in dialogue, freedom and participation and is ready to engage in dialogue with any party on any issue of common concern.

On Jordan's relations with

Israel, Dr. Majali said Jordan has concluded several agreements with Israel and is committed to honour these agreements. However, if Israel fails to honour its commitments under the agreements, then it will be held responsible for its failure, Dr. Majali said.

The prime minister blamed the Israeli intransigent position for the deadlock in the stalled peace talks on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

On Jordan's role towards the resumption of peace talks, Dr. Majali said Jordan has been influential in ending the stalemate in Israeli-Palestinian talks on Hebron, which resulted in an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), under which Israel returned 80 per cent of the city of Hebron to the Palestinians.

Dr. Majali said Jordan does not compete with Egypt, but complements Egypt's role, adding that Jordan maintains continuous contact and coordina-

tion with Egypt on this and all issues of common concern.

On Jordan's relations with both Syria and Iraq, Dr. Majali said Jordan's relation with both countries is good and based on mutual respect, even if differences in some views and positions exist.

On the future Jordanian-Palestinian relations, the prime minister said it is premature to talk about any kind of federation or confederation between Jordan and Palestine right now.

However, when the Palestinians regain their rights and establish their own state on their soil, we can talk about such issue, provided that both peoples are willing to engage in such relations.

On Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations, Dr. Majali said Jordan always seeks to heal rifts among Arab brethren. Dr. Majali voiced hope that relations will be restored to normal between Iraq and Kuwait, and that the issue of Kuwaiti captives and missing persons be settled amicably.

On Jordanian-Kuwaiti relations, Dr. Majali said they are returning to normal gradually, noting that air flights and postal services have been resumed between both countries.

Regarding relations with the other countries of the Gulf, Dr. Majali said Jordan maintains continuous contacts with these countries and described relations with them as excellent.

On investment opportunities for Gulf businessmen, Dr. Majali said Gulf businessmen have already established investment projects in Jordan, and voiced hope that more Gulf and Arab investments be made, utilising the present opportune investment climate.

On Jordan's position should Iraq attack Kuwait again, Dr. Majali dismissed this as impossible, saying that Jordan will stand firm by its position, which calls for non-interference in the internal affairs of any country by force.

Government, opposition discuss 'framework' of future dialogue

By Amy Henderson
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A first meeting between opposition parties and the government yesterday to discuss the opposition's intention to boycott upcoming parliamentary elections barring concessions from the government on contentious political issues seemed to end inconclusively.

Leaders from the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and the small opposition party, Al Mustaqbal (the Future), met with Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour during a 90-minute meeting that focused on the "mechanism of the future dialogue," said Abdul Latif Arabiyat, secretary general of the IAF, who represented the Islamist party during the talks.

Statements from the IAF and the rest of the opposition, however, remained non-committal over the meeting, an indication that yesterday's meeting was an assessment of positions.

Dr. Arabiyat told the Jordan Times that the parties to the meeting did not discuss

any of the opposition's demands in detail, but stated that the two sides had agreed on "several matters within the framework of dialogue."

A statement released by the Muslim Brotherhood, the backbone of the boycott movement, said that the six opposition parties were prepared to enter a dialogue, provided that such a dialogue would be unconditional, and address all demands on the opposition's agenda.

"We are now waiting for a call from Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to begin a dialogue, which we expect will begin sometime this week," he said.

He added that his party was still committed to its decision, but, he said, "we are hopeful that we won't have to boycott after we complete our discussions."

Dr. Ensour refused to comment on the meeting and on the possibility of "unconditional dialogue."

"I am not prepared to make a statement on the dialogue, and I do not intend to for some time," he said.

Yesterday's meeting was the culmination of official efforts initiated by Dr.

Majali in late July to soften hardline stands on both sides after several opposition parties, led by the Muslim Brotherhood and the IAF, resolved to boycott the Nov. 4 polling, throwing relations between the opposition and the government into crisis.

The opposition's decision to boycott stems from their dissatisfaction with the one-man, one-vote electoral system; the flailing peace process; economic legislation which they say opens the door to "the enemy's participation in the economy;" and dwindling political and personal freedoms exemplified in the government's issuance of amendments to the press and publications law and strong words against political parties and professional associations.

Although the boycott, initiated in July, did not manage to attract the entirety of the opposition camp — five opposition parties are still undecided as to whether or not to participate in elections — it seems to be gaining ground. One party, Al Mustaqbal, headed by Suleiman Arzur, gave its support to the boycott last week, and yesterday, a petition of 93 signatures of independent citizens supporting the boycott was circulated to newspapers for publication. Among the signatories were leading political personalities Taher Masri and Ahmad Obaidat.

Last week, His Majesty King Hussein urged the opposition, particularly the Islamists, to participate in the elections, stating that "their contribution to the democratic process is needed to safeguard national interests."

During an address to a public rally in Ma'an, the King dismissed fears of Islamic domination by Israel and indicated that Jordan's peace treaty with that country, signed by both Houses of Parliament, could not be a condition for the opposition's participation in the elections.

The King also linked the resolution of the Palestinian issue to the elections law and said that "...until rights are restored and until those who wish to stay or leave the country make a decision and until we reach a stable and final solution, then we will ensure that equality reigns."

Egypt military begins trial of 84 Islamists

CAIRO (R) — Eighty-four suspected militant Islamists went on trial in an Egyptian military court on Sunday charged with planning to assassinate public figures and stage attacks on the orders of an exiled leader, court sources said.

It is the second military trial of militants in as many months and brings the number of members of Islamist groups now on trial in army and state security courts in Egypt to 241.

The defendants in Sunday's trial are alleged members of the Islamic Jihad group, which is fighting to overthrow the government.

Two of the defendants, Adel Abdul Meguid and Ahmad Ibrahim Sayed Najjar, are being tried in their absence because military prosecutors say they are awaiting to be granted political asylum in Britain.

The two men are charged with sending money to Egypt to revive the activity of Islamic Jihad on the orders of Ayman Zawahiri, the group's leader, who also lives abroad but it is not clear where. It is also unclear why Mr. Zawahiri is not standing trial in the case.

Many Islamic Jihad members were executed or imprisoned for their role in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

Egypt has often complained that Western countries are sheltering fugitive militants who coordinate attacks with comrades back home in a bid to overthrow the government and set up a strict Islamist state.

The military charge sheet against the other 82 defendants said the men had packed a car with explosives and had planned to blow it up at the busy Khan Khalili bazaar, a popular tourist destination in Cairo, in order to damage Egypt's economy.

The militants are also alleged to have bought arms and explosives in preparation for attacks on policemen and senior officials.

They also face charges of belonging to an illegal anti-government group.

The 82 defendants all pleaded not guilty. The judge referred three of them to forensic doctors after they complained they had been tortured in prison.

It is not yet clear what sentence the prosecution will ask for. The trial has been adjourned until Aug. 31.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in 1992 cleared the way for military courts to try civilians in a bid to nip in the bud a growing militant campaign to topple his government. The courts, known



Egyptian members of the Islamic Jihad group, stand behind bars during their military trial in Cairo Sunday (AFP photo)

for their swift and harsh sentences, have sent dozens of militants to the gallows.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat salutes his military advisor Ghazi Mhanna as he enters his office in the Gaza Strip Sunday. Mr. Arafat rejected Israeli allegations that his planned 'national unity' talks with militant groups amounted to 'appeasement of terrorism' (Reuters photo)

Netanyahu envoy thanks Arafat for police action PNA plans gradual boycott of \$9 million-a-day in Israeli products

Combined agency dispatches

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent a personal envoy to thank Palestinian President Yasser Arafat for Palestinian National Authority (PNA) aid in finding the killers of an Israeli taxi driver, Israeli government sources said Sunday.

They said the envoy, Yitzhak Molho, secretly met the Palestinian president in Gaza Saturday night.

The sources said the men also discussed last week's peace shuttle by U.S. envoy Dennis Ross and sanctions Israel imposed on Palestinians after two suicide bombers killed 14 people in a Jerusalem market on July 30.

There was no immediate indication the meeting, the highest Israeli-PNA contact since Mr. Ross' mission, would lead to an easing of the sanctions or to more vigorous Palestinian efforts on security wanted by Washington.

Israel demanded Mr. Arafat arrest militants and crush the infrastructure of

Israeli official in London to probe double-suicide bombing — press

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's Shin Bet internal security service chief is in London to investigate claims that last month's double suicide bombing in Jerusalem was carried out by Arab guerrillas based in Britain, the Sunday Telegraph newspaper reported. It said Shin Bet's Ami Ayalon was consulting with agents of MI5, its British counterpart. The Telegraph said Mr. Ayalon was investigating reports that the suicide bombers entered Israel on British passports and the attack might have been planned by Arabs based in London. Another Israeli government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, could not comment on the newspaper report but said that since the July 30 bombing, in which 16 people including the attackers died, there had been discussion of Islamist militant activity in Europe. "After the terrorist attack...there was some discussion here about organisations in Europe collecting money for Hamas and Islamic Jihad," the official said.

Islamist groups after the suicide attacks. It also sealed off Palestinian areas and froze millions of dollars of financial transfers it owes the PNA.

The Palestinian president rejected Sunday Israeli allegations that his planned "national unity" talks with militant groups amounted to "appeasement of terrorism."

"No doubt we are against terrorist activities...but this is a Palestinian interest and we are insisting to carry on

dialogue with all Palestinian groups," Mr. Arafat told reporters in Gaza.

"We are as Palestinians completely committed to the peace process and at the same time we are facing collective punishment from the Israeli government," Mr. Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat Saturday cited the arrest by his forces of three Palestinian car thieves who confessed to

(Continued on page 2)

U.S. says Israeli delay on funds 'unhelpful' to peace

WASHINGTON (R) — Israel's delay in releasing funds to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) after last month's suicide bomb attack was "unhelpful" to the peace process, the United States said Saturday.

Israel withheld the tax money and customs duties after two Palestinians killed 16 people at a Jerusalem market on July 30. Palestinian leaders condemned the sanctions as collective punishment.

"We've indicated some of Israel's actions, for example, withholding the money, is unhelpful," White House National Security Adviser Sandy Berger said in a television interview.

The Palestinian cabinet issued a statement Saturday calling on Israel to live up to its pledges and reverse the crackdown imposed after the bombing.

"While the Israeli government says it is easing the

siege measures, on the ground it is pressuring residents and cutting off their earnings," the statement said.

In addition to freezing financial transfers to the PNA, Israel sealed the West Bank and Gaza after the attack.

Mr. Berger said there was certainly no equation between setting off a bomb in a marketplace and Israel's actions.

"One is terror, the other is a policy which we think is unhelpful to the peace process," he said on the CNN programme "Evans Novak."

Mr. Berger urged Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to "take some steps towards each other and restore a level of confidence," which he said had been substantially and seriously eroded. U.S. Secretary of State

Madeleine Albright plans a trip to the Middle East to focus on speeding Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, but Mr. Berger said no specific date had been set.

Mrs. Albright said in a speech August 6 she was prepared to go to the region provided progress was made in improving the security situation which had deteriorated over the past six months and culminated in the deadly July 30 bombing.

"She'll be going soon...there's only two more weeks left in August. But I would say she would be going soon," Mr. Berger told CNN.

"We also have to have from the Palestinians a level of security cooperation with the Israelis that we have not seen yet, and that is really indispensable to getting this process going again," he said.

Netanyahu envoy thanks Arafat for police action

have to reactivate the institutions of the Palestine Liberation Organisation," he said, after talks with the radical Syrian-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

She said the Palestinians were "not willing to pay a price" for a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and warned that too much pressure could lead to an explosion between Israel and the Palestinians had been restored and that Mr. Netanyahu would soon lift the sanctions.

But so far there has been little movement from either side.

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...concentrated on the media as
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...this session, topics such
...slogans, and methods in which
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...the council's choice. He also detailed the role of the media in an election campaign. Under Abdullahi, who previously served as Menteri Besar, Masri's election campaign in designing the election slogan, Helmi Sari, a professor of sociology, concluded the session by likening the campaign as a means of communication concentrated on the media and influenced by candidates. However, he should be used conscientiously to break the nominee.

During this session, topics such as slogans, and methods of influencing the voters were discussed.

100

14:10.....Cartoons 15:00.....Gillette Sports Special 15:30.....Deep Water Haven 16:00.....Animal Show 16:30.....Ocean Girl 17:15.....French Programmes 19:00.....News in French 19:30.....News Headline 19:35.....Neighbours 20:00.....Comedy — Murphy Brown 20:30.....Babylon 5 21:10.....Highlander 22:00.....News in English 22:35.....Emergency Room 23:15.....Homicide	14:10.....Tel. 637440. De la Salle Church Tel. 661757. Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622266 Anglican Church Tel. 652826. Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331. Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261. St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751. Amman International Church Tel. 5516245 Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328. German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457 The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932. Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691. The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295 English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.	Min/Max temp. Amman.....17/28 Aqaba.....24/36 Deserts.....16/31 Jordan Valley.....22/35 Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 35 Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent. Aqaba 42 per cent.	Dr. Rafiq Atallah994424 Khalifeh pharmacy985417	EMERGENCIES Food Control Centre.....637111 Civil Defence Department661111 Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341 Civil Defence Emergency.....1399 Rescue Police 192.62111.637777 Fire Brigade.....617101 Blood Bank.....775121 Highway Police.....843402 Traffic Police.....896390 Public Security Dept.....630321 Hotel Complaints.....605800 Price Complaints.....661176 Water & Sewerage Complaints.....897467 Amman Municipality Complaints787111 Telephone Information (directory assistance).....121 Overseas Calls010230 Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101 Abdali Tel. Repairs.....661101 Jordan Television773111 Radio Jordan774111 Water Authority680100 J. Electricity Authority815615 Electric Power Co.....636381 RJ Flight Information08-53200 Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200	HOSPITALS AMMAN: Luzmila630195 Hussein Medical Centre813813/2 Khalidi Maternity.....642381/6 Akileh Maternity.....642341/2 Jabal Amman Maternity642362 Malhas, J. Ammanian636140 Palestine, Shmeisani607071 Shmeisani Hospital669131 University Hospital845845 Al-Muasher Hospital6672279 The Islamic, Abdali666126/37 Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6 Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3 Al-Bashir.....775111/2/6 Army, Marka891611/5 Queen Alia Hospital602240/50 Amal Hospital674155 The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199 ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323 Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560 Ibn Sina Hospital.....(09)986732 Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)999090 IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555 Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725 Ibn Al Nafies Hospital	FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT This information is supplied by <i>This Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52710).</i> ARRIVALS Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights 08:05Damascus (RJ) 08:45Sanaa (RJ) 09:30Jeddah (RJ) 09:45New Delhi (RJ) 10:20Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 10:25Beirut (RJ) 15:25Kuwait (RJ) 17:15Cairo (RJ) 17:30London (RJ) 17:40New York, Amsterdam 02:15Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur (RJ) 01:00Tunis (RJ) 03:35Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (RJ) Other Flights 13:45Khartoum (SD) 14:10Muscat, Bahrain (GF) 15:05Vienna (OS) 16:50Doha (QR) 19:50Tel Aviv (LY) 20:15Dubai (EK) 21:10Paris, Damascus (AF) 21:10Beirut (ME) 22:15Cairo (MS) 23:30Athens (OA) 01:20Amsterdam, Damascus (KL) Royal Wings (RW) 07:05Tel Aviv (RW) 08:25Amman (QAIA) (RW) 09:15Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 10:50Aqaba (RW) 12:10Amman (QAIA) (RW) 13:00Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 22:20Aqaba (RW) 23:50Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)	DEPARTURES Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights 06:35Beirut (RJ) 09:10Kuwait (RJ) 13:15Cairo (RJ) 13:25London (RJ) 13:35Frankfurt (RJ) 17:00Tunis (add) (RJ) 21:45Bahrain, Doha (RJ) 22:05Dubai, Muscat (RJ) 22:45Al 'Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 23:45Sanaa (RJ) 23:59Damascus (RJ) Other Flights 06:15Istanbul (TK) 08:45Beirut (ME) 09:10London (BA) 15:00Bahrain (GF) 15:00Khartoum (SD) 15:50Vienna (OS) 17:50Doha (QR) 21:10Tel Aviv (LY) 23:15Cairo (MS) 23:55Damascus, Paris (AF) 02:30Amsterdam (KL) 04:00Athens (OA) Royal Wings (RW) 06:30Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 07:50Tel Aviv (RW) 08:55Amman (QAIA) (RW) 09:50Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 11:20Aqaba (RW) 12:40Amman (QAIA) (RW) 21:30Amman (QAIA) (RW) 22:50Aqaba (RW)	PRAYER TIMES 04:33.....Fajr 05:56.....(Sunrise) Duha 12:39.....Dhuhr 16:18.....Asr 19:22.....Maghreb 20:46.....'Isha	CHURCHES St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifeh, Tel. 810740 Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785. St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590 Church of the Annunciation	WEATHER Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Fine weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at low altitudes and winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.	WOMEN By Hind-Lara Special to the Jordanian	By Hind-Lara Special to the Jordanian
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Home News

Jordan Times, Monday, August 18, 1997

3

Princess Basma announces QAF decentralisation plans

IRBID (Petra) — Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) Chairperson HRH Princess Basma Sunday announced that the fund has begun to apply decentralisation plans within both its departments as well as projects currently in progress around the country.

During a tour in the Irbid governorate, the Princess described the decentralisation programme as implemented within the framework of a comprehensive plan to stimulate social service and community centre activities.

The plan revises and appraises QAF social service programmes and activities for local communities in order to utilise available resources in the best possible manner, she

said. Involvement of QAF centre employees in formulating decisions, streamlining bureaucracy, saving time and effort and conducting activities within a wider margin of flexibility, that projects might be executed more rapidly, are key components of the plan, Princess Basma stated.

These additions will enable staff to adapt their work to the development needs of their given local communities, she added.

The new system will afford new opportunities for training and rehabilitating individuals, offering soft loans that families in need might initiate income-generating businesses to improve living standards, according to the

Princess.

The Queen Alia Fund for Social Development will finalise new mechanisms for the system's implementation, concentrating on small businesses, before the end of this month, she confirmed.

While the fund has been in existence for 20 years, it regularly revises its programmes and projects in order to adapt to new trends and revise local community needs, Princess Basma explained.

An increase in poverty rates and unemployment prompted the fund to undertake new measures in order to augment activities and better offer community service, she added.

Subsequent to visiting the QAF Social Services Centre and the Bushra

Charitable Society, Princess Basma chaired a meeting to review voluntary work.

She announced a donation of JD 2,000 to help the society implement various projects.

Irbid Governor Qafan Majali briefed the Princess on centre activities undertaken by local women, its kindergarten unit and production projects.

Princess Basma met with the centre's women's committee to review activities, before chairing a meeting of QAF Social Service Centre heads to discuss a programme providing training to local women.

During her tour's inception, the Princess inaugurated a clinic and computer training centre, both headed by the fund.

Foreign ministry adopts ownership programme

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has adopted a programme stipulating ownership of various buildings in which Jordanian embassies are housed, according to Minister of Foreign Affairs Faysal Tarawneh Sunday.

Currently, the ministry owns only 30 per cent of the premises in which these embassies are located, but plans have been developed which stipulate total ownership.

While briefing Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on his ministry's reform programmes, Dr. Tarawneh affirmed coordination with the Institute of Diplomacy.

The institute, he explained, trains foreign ministry employees to assume diplomatic posts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs plans to log onto the Internet to acquire current information regarding events at home and abroad, Dr. Tarawneh explained.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Faysal Tarawneh briefs Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on his ministry's reform programmes (Petra photo)

The premier requested that ministry officials call for periodic meetings between ambassadors and embassy staff with Jordanian communities living abroad.

Reports covering economic and social development should be

referred to these embassies which, Dr. Majali affirmed, convey Jordan's image to the outside world.

Attaches working in foreign embassies should communicate with the Kingdom's various ministries, and government depart-

ments must coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs whenever they send delegations abroad, he added.

Heads of ministry departments, who aired their proposals regarding ongoing administrative reforms, also attended the meeting.

JRTVC signs agreement with UAE organisation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTVC) Sunday signed an agreement with the Gulf Technical Institution (GTI) stipulating that the latter might utilise the facilities of the Jordan Company for Television, Radio and Cinema Production to produce radio and television programmes.

The three-year agreement facilitates coopera-

tion between Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), notably (the city of) Dubai for joint programme production, according to JRTVC Director General Ihsan Ramzi.

The agreement will encourage high-quality Arabic programmes and will aid Jordan in marketing both media and artistic productions to other Arab countries, he said.

The two sides have

pledged to produce joint programmes, concentrating on those from Jordan, Mr. Ramzi stated.

The JRTVC director, who signed the accord with GTI Board Chairman Riyad Shueibi, described the agreement as expanding prospects for cooperation between the two countries and increasing opportunities for people interested in radio and television production.

He stated that the joint

programmes will be produced in two studios during an annual total of 500 hours for the next three years.

Mr. Ramzi affirmed his expectation that preliminary work will commence this week, however actual programme production is not expected to start before October.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi attended the signing ceremony.

'Indonesia fully supports King's efforts for regional peace'

AMMAN (Petra) — Indonesian Ambassador to Jordan Eddy Sumantri Sunday affirmed that his country fully supports His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to achieve peace and security in the Middle East.

He stated his hope that Palestinians and Israelis would overcome the present deadlock in the peace process.

In an interview with Jordan News Agency, Petra, to mark the 52nd anniversary of Indonesia's inde-

pendence, the ambassador affirmed that Indonesia's refusal to recognise Israel until the latter's implementation of all U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning Palestine as well as the withdrawal of forces from the occupied territories, including Jerusalem.

According to Mr. Sumantri, as in the past, Indonesian Muslims and Christians will not visit the holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem until a comprehensive and lasting peace has been established.

Describing Indonesia's ties with Jordan as very strong in political, cultural and economic fields, Mr. Sumantri stated that 25 Indonesian students currently study at Jordanian universities and that more are expected in the near future.

He reaffirmed his country's keenness to further bolster trade ties and increase the volume of exchanged goods and bilateral visits.

Trade between the two countries last year reached

\$70 million, the ambassador confirmed.

He stated that businesspersons from Japan, Britain, and Taiwan have invested \$92 billion in Indonesia, thereby raising the economic growth rate to an annual 8.2 per cent.

Indonesia's 200 million inhabitants continue to seek closer cooperation in economic, trade and cultural fields with various countries and regional, Islamic and international organisations, Mr. Sumantri concluded.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FUHEIS EIGHTH FESTIVAL

* Play "Citizen at Your Request" (in Arabic) at the main theatre at 9:00 p.m.

* Seminar entitled

"Jordan and the Available Option" with the participation of Salem Nahhas, Wasef Azar, and Ahmad Farhan at the church museum square at 6:30 p.m.

* Exhibitions on Jerusalem, tourism, environment, agriculture, handicrafts as well

as slides on Jordan's touristic sites at the festival premises.

LECTURE

* "Birds of the Middle East" by Richard Porter at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) at the RSCN premises, above

the Civil Consumers Corporation store, Jubaiha at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Islamic Bookbinding Exhibition" at the British Council on Rainbow St., Jabal Amman, until Aug. 31.

Men suspected of plans to attack Israel

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Officials Sunday confirmed the arrest of five men in Ruseifeh, near Zarqa, who were alleged plotting to launch assaults against Israel.

The five men, all Jordanians between the ages of 25 and 40, were arrested 10 days ago in the house of one of the suspects, an official source told the Jordan Times.

He added that police found two hand grenades and a machine gun in the men's possession.

The five men were plotting to execute attacks during the month of Ramadan, and had planned to infiltrate Israel through Wadi Araba, in southern Jordan, the source added.

A second official source confirmed that the five men are affiliated with the outlawed group, Bayat Al Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), of

which 10 members were convicted by the State Security Court last October on charges of attempted sabotage and lese majeste.

The ten men received prison terms ranging from two years to life. They were arrested before carrying out any attack.

Three other men who were tried with the same group were acquitted by the State Security Court.

One of the convicted men, Mohammad Taher Mohammad, known also as Abu Mohammad Al Maqdisi, was sentenced to 15 years incarceration and judged by the prosecution as the group leader.

In a 1996 magazine interview, Mr. Al Maqdisi affirmed acquaintance with the four men involved in the November 1995 bombing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which killed five Americans and two Indian nationals.

Prior to their beheading, the four men confessed that much of their

actions stemmed from the influence of various Islamic militant leaders, including Al Maqdisi.

Bayat Al Imam followers believe only themselves to be the true followers of the Islamic faith and do not attend mosque prayers or schools as they reject these systems.

According to the source, State Security Prosecutor Mahmoud Obeidat is still interrogating the five suspects, and will "probably end his inquiry in the next few weeks and refer them to the State Security Court."

The source added that the five men will likely be charged with plotting subversion, belonging to an illegal organisation, and possession of illegal weapons (explosives) with illicit intent.

The last count could carry the death penalty if the men are judged guilty by the State Security Court.

Women attend workshop to promote electoral leadership

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Approximately fifty women last week attended a three-day workshop on promoting women's leadership and undertaking campaign management for the 1997 parliamentary elections.

Seminar participants were addressed both as potential candidates and voters.

Malak Nasser, who covered different methods of influencing a given voter's choice, has nominated herself for legislative council elections in Palestine.

Ms. Nasser also detailed the role of proper planning and preparation in an election campaign.

Emad Abdulhadi, who previously managed former Prime Minister Taher Masi's electoral campaign, discussed guidelines in designing election logos and pamphlets.

Dr. Helmi Sari, a professor of sociology at the University of Jordan, concluded the session by focusing on the election campaign as a means of communication.

He concentrated on the media as a significant channel to be utilised by candidates. However, he admonished that media should be used conscientiously as it could either "make or break" the nominee.

Within this session, topics such as the design of persuasive slogans, and methods in which these slogans could be utilised in influencing public opinion, were also debated.

"This [workshop] will enable participants to design campaign slogans and successful messages," Dr. Sari affirmed. Persuasive slogans are comprised of "one and two sided messages," as well as creating messages which resonate on both an emotional and logical level.

"We are training women to recognise when (it is appropriate) to use an emotional slogan and when to use a logical one," Dr. Sari, who has managed various election campaigns, stated. "It all depends on the target audience and the social climate."

When addressing a specific audience, the candidate should determine the exact aims of her presentation, Dr. Sari asserted.

The first five minutes of [a given] presentation are the most crucial, and public attention should be drawn to the speaker, he explained. Charisma, said Dr. Hilmi, is not the only way of gaining your audience's attention, but also the art of rhetoric.

As for communication methods employed in electoral campaigns, Dr. Sari found that, up to 1993, the media was ineffective in influencing a voter's choice.

"Tribal affiliation played and still plays a major role in electing a nominee," he said. "Media can play an effective role, as it does in countries such as the United States and England [in which places] voters do not have a preconceived image of the nominee."

"In Jordan, however, the role of communication is fairly

weak as people depend on the personal information they [receive regarding] the candidate," Dr. Sari maintained. "Those who nominate themselves in Jordan usually [enjoy some degree of public recognition]."

In a study conducted on the role of communication methods utilised in election campaigns, he found that although pamphlets and other communication methods have a limited effect in Jordan, they play a stronger role in Egypt and Tunisia.

During the session addressing the role of public speeches in electoral campaigns, Dr. Sari enumerated various skills required for presentations.

One principle is "face-to-face communication," the most important channel in influencing people in the Arab World, he contended.

This method can be implemented through round table discussions, open debates, conferences and workshops. This tactic was described as being influential as it gives the candidate a chance to introduce herself to the audience and detail her agenda.

Assertive communication was emphasised as a way of exercising self control during debates and open dialogues. The sociologist asserted the importance of self-control in face-to-face communication as a given candidate tries to establish positive rapport with her audience.

"During workshops held in Aqaba, Irbid, Zarqa, and Amman, I noticed women's increasing awareness includ-

ing that of nominating themselves for elections," Dr. Sari told the Jordan Times.

Women are quite prepared, in terms of voting or self-nomination, to design their slogans, and participate in the actual political campaign, he said.

"I feel that I have learnt a lot here. I [was familiar with] many theories on how to implement election campaigns, but at this workshop we were given the chance to [put these ideas into] practice," Nadia Aloul, a workshop participant, told the Jordan Times. "Our trainers were speaking from their own personal experience as they had either nominated themselves or previously managed electoral campaigns."

Ms. Aloul did however maintain her feeling that women are disadvantaged in the elections.

The one-person, one-vote system does not give women the chance [for equitable competition], she stated.

"I had hoped that this system would change [in time for] the coming elections, but unfortunately conditions remain the same," Ms. Aloul lamented.

The workshop was organised by the Department of Women in Development at the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF). This department works on expanding awareness of election laws and the role of the Jordanian woman in the 1997 parliamentary elections, both as nominees and as voters.

BEIJING (AFP) — Desperate North Koreans are tearing their devastated maize crop from the fields and digging trenches around rice paddies to prevent that crop from being destroyed by late summer rains, a Red Cross representative said Sunday.

"We saw people rearing the corn stalks out of the fields, because 60 to 70 per cent of the crop has been ruined," said Jon Valfells, head of the Media Service for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

"They were also digging ditches around the fields so water from any heavy rainfall can run off," he said in Beijing after a 10-day inspection tour of North Korea.

Sixty days without rain wiped out almost 70 percent or 1.5 million tonnes of starving North Korea's maize crop this summer, according to World Food Programme surveys and the North Korean government.

The continuing drought is also threatening to decimate the rice crop which is due for harvest in September, bringing further disaster to trouble-struck North Korea after two years of heavy flooding have left grain silos empty and the nation dependent on international aid.

Local farmers told Mr. Valfells a further danger was heavy rains around the end of August which nearly always followed periods of drought and could also destroy the rice crop.

The International Federation is distributing 10,000 tonnes of grain a month to 740,000 people, providing them with 450 grammes (15.75 ounces) of corn or rice a day.

But Mr. Valfells warned this amount was not enough to stop some people slipping into malnutrition, which is already widespread throughout the nation.

"There was obvious malnutrition everywhere, especially in industrial cities," he said after a tour north and south of the capital Pyongyang, which took in the countryside and the cities of Kaesong, Wonsan, Anju and Huichon.

"This is a silent, slow famine. People just disappear into their houses and die silently," he said.

In a hospital in the northern city of Huichon, Valfells saw a three-year old boy who weighed only six kilograms.

Although the child had gained one kilogramme since admission, he should have weighed 15-16 kilograms, according to hos-

pital vice President, Cha Gi-Chol.

North Korea has admitted to at least 100 child deaths so far but has refused to provide nationwide figures.

The U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) warned last week that an estimated 80,000 children in North Korea were severely malnourished.

Hospitals, which have no Western medicines and very little food are forced to turn away all but the most serious cases of malnutrition.

"The saddest cases were children around the age of three who were conceived and born as the floods and food shortages started," Mr. Valfells said.

"They have never had enough food and this will affect their mental and physical development. It will affect a whole generation," he warned.

KABUL (R) — The Taliban authorities in Kabul have issued a protest against a decision by U.S. authorities to suspend contacts with the Afghan embassy in Washington.

"Since the embassy of the Islamic State of Afghanistan has been in contact with the central government (the Taliban) and was representing to some extent the aims of the Islamic State, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic State does not consider this action fair or just and expresses its protest at this measure," the Taliban said in a note given to reporters in Kabul Saturday.

The United States Thursday gave the Afghan embassy in Washington one week to close down, saying it does not want to seem partial towards the fundamentalist Taliban, who control the Afghan capital.

"The Department of State has decided to suspend temporarily operations at the Afghanistan embassy in Washington, effective Aug. 21st," State Department spokesman James Rubin told reporters in Washington.

"We concluded that the result of not taking this action would be that one representative of the Taliban would end up being in charge — that would send a signal that we were not neutral," he added.

But the Taliban statement said that the Afghan consulate in New York, which is still controlled by officers loyal to the opposition ousted from Kabul last September, remains open, calling into question the American claims of neutrality.

"The suspension of the embassy in Washington while the consulate in New York, which is under the control of the opposition, continues to function, brings into question the claim of the United States of America to be neutral on the Afghan issue," it said.

Mr. Rubin said that the consulate in New York could stay open because it provides services to the Afghan-American community.

"We draw a distinction between the political functions performed in an embassy and the service functions performed at a consulate," he said.

The Afghan embassy has had two senior diplomats in dispute over who represents the country. They are Seraj Jamal, nominated charge d'affaires by the Taliban, and former Charge D'affaires Yar Mohammad Mohabbat, an appointee of the old government.

In May, the Taliban asked Mr. Mohabbat to give up his post in favor of Mr. Jamal, but the State Department has not accredited Mr. Jamal as his successor, an embassy source said.

Mr. Rubin said the Afghan diplomats could stay in the United States as representatives of Afghan political factions, but they would lose their diplomatic immunity.

nity.

"If they want to stay and serve as a faction representative, they would have to do it from some other place (outside the embassy building)," he added.

The Taliban controls two thirds of Afghanistan but are battling opposition forces who hold a large swathe of territory in the north of the country.

Only three countries — Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — have formally recognised the Taliban as the legitimate authorities in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's seat in the United Nations is occupied by a representative of the opposition.

Most other nations say they are waiting for a decision from the United Nations Accreditation Committee on who should represent Afghanistan. The committee is expected to discuss the matter in October.

RANGOON (AFP) — Burma's ruling junta announced Sunday that a special court had sentenced three cousins of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi to long prison terms for alleged involvement in a U.S.-funded terrorist conspiracy.

"Special court passes sentence for act of high treason and association with unlawful organisations," blared the title of an information sheet distributed by military authorities here which accused them to smuggling explosives and money to Aung San Suu Kyi.

Cho Aung Than, a cousin and formerly a close personal aide of the Nobel peace laureate, was sentenced along with his sister Nge Mama Than and her husband Myint Swe to terms of seven years under an emergency provisions act.

They were also given three years for unlawful association.

Their associate Myo Aung Thant was sentenced to life in prison for high treason in addition to identical terms of seven and three years.

Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, first secretary of the military's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), presented the state's case against the defendants to the media at a news conference here in June, the statement said.

The sentences were passed on Aug. 15.

The statement charged the group were involved in the smuggling of explosives and at least \$85,000 to Aung San Suu Kyi, who heads the National League for Democracy (NLD).

They were also accused of association with pro-democracy organisations in exile.

The National Coalition Government of Union of Burma (NCGUB), led by another cousin of the NLD leader, Sein Win, was formed by victorious candidates who fled the country after 1990 parliamentary elections which were never ratified by the ruling junta.

Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD took more than eighty per cent of the seats in the only free elections to have been held since the military took power in 1962.

The current junta was formed after a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in 1988.

SLORC has accused the NCGUB, the ethnic Karen National Union and the Federation of Trade Unions of Burma of terrorist activities including a bombing in April at the house of Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Tin Oo, which killed his daughter.

Representatives of the organisations have dismissed the accusations, saying they were part of the junta's campaign of repression against pro-democracy forces.

U.S. officials said their government has openly funded assistance to refugees on the Thai border who have fled Burmese military campaigns against ethnic minorities, and blasted charges of funding terrorism as "an absolute lie."

TOKYO (AFP) — The Aum Supreme Truth Doomsday Cult, blamed for a 1995 nerve gas attack and a number of other crimes, is becoming more active as its membership increases, a newspaper reported Sunday.

The cult opened its new headquarters last month in Tokyo's downtown district of Shinjuku, where an estimated 50 members, including children, are believed to be living, the Sankei Shinbun said.

"On Sundays, followers gather there. Sometimes, there are more than 100 followers," a police official was quoted as saying.

The Aum's previous head-

quarters in Tokyo was shut down last year after the sect was declared bankrupt and had its official religious group status removed.

The Sankei, quoting police sources, said the cult now has 2,000 followers and many of them are living in groups in some 200 apartments across Japan. There are also 12 branches and training centres, it said.

The number of followers represents an increase from 1,000 estimated by the government late last year.

Before the nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway on March 20, 1995, which killed 12 people and injured several thousand com-

muters, the cult had an estimated 10,000 members in Japan and 30,000 in Russia.

The paper said many of the followers remained loyal to Guru Shoko Asahara, now on trial over the subway attack, another sarin nerve gas attack in the central Japan city of Matsuyama and more than a dozen other crimes.

"More than 90 per cent of the followers recognise the crimes committed by Asahara, but they have not abandoned their faith to the guru," Taro Takimoto, a lawyer assisting defecting members, was quoted as saying.

They still have the ide-

alised image of Asahara in their mind."

The cult has also resumed its businesses, selling low-priced computers at its two stores in Tokyo, the newspaper said.

"They are saving their incomes. I fear that they are going to buy a piece of land somewhere to build a new colony," Mr. Takimoto was quoted as saying.

In January this year, a legal panel turned down a government request to outlaw the Aum, saying it was "impossible to find sufficient reason" to believe the cult could still be a threat to society.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Three people were still missing late Saturday after rescuers spent 12 hours looking for the last of 11 tourists who vanished when a flash flood swept through an Arizona canyon, local officials said.

Five bodies were found Friday, bringing to eight the number recovered since the tragedy Tuesday. Search efforts were to resume early Sunday.

Some 55 people were taking part in the search of Antelope Canyon near Lake Powell.

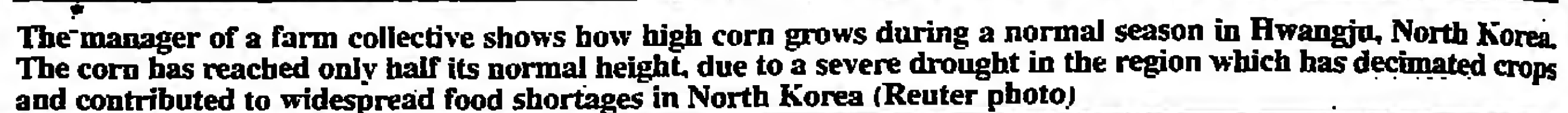
Seven of the hikers were French, two were from the United States and one each from Britain and Sweden. All were reportedly between 18 and 35 years old.

One survivor, a man identified as tour guide, Francisco Quintana, 28, was hospitalised and released.

Drawing some 20,000 visitors a year, Antelope Canyon is located in Glen Canyon National Park some seven kilometres from Lake Powell on the Navajo Indian reservation. To reach the canyon floor, visitors must use a ladder.

The canyon is three metres (10 feet) across at its widest point and between 18 and 20 metres deep.

Authorities have said they have little hope of finding survivors among the tourists, who had asked Mr. Quintana to take them down to the Antelope Canyon floor for picture-taking.



BEIJING (R) — Beijing urged the United States Sunday to lift sanctions on sales of nuclear equipment and high-technology to China, saying the relaxation would help to cut the U.S. trade deficit.

‘There is a ‘shortcut’ to quickly enlarge bilateral trade. That is to eliminate the exports sanctions towards China,” the China Daily Business Weekly quoted Zhou Shijian, an expert on Sino-U.S. ties, as saying.

The U.S. trade deficit with China was estimated at \$10.5 billion in 1996 based on Chinese customs figures, and the lifting of sanctions

JAKARTA (R) — South East Asian countries, reeling under speculative attacks on their currencies, now face a new threat to their largely agrarian economies from a drought developing in the region.

The arid spell tightening its grip on the Indonesian archipelago is linked to the El Nino weather phenomenon, and threatens crops ranging from coffee to corn and cocoa, commodity traders said.

"There has been no rain in Lampung for two months," a coffee trader from the key growing region in south Sumatra said at the weekend.

In previous years, the area received some rainfall during the dry season, he said, but "it's been particularly dry this year."

Sugito Suwito, head of Indonesia's statistics bureau, said on August 13 that the country's inflation rate could exceed the projected six per cent this year if the drought intensifies.

An official from the National Meteorological and Geophysical Office said he had now been instructed by the government not to release weather forecasts to the media.

Indonesian traders said coffee plants had begun to flower in Lampung and the flowering and fruiting process could be affected if the much-needed rains did not come on time.

The situation is very much the same in south Sulawesi, the country's main cocoa growing area.

"A few weeks ago, we had continuous rain that aborted some of the flowers. Now, we are back again to the dry spell, and the flowering has to start all over again," one trader said.

Traders said the corn harvest in east Java, set to peak towards November, could also be affected. One trader said daily arrivals were presently half the usual 100 tonnes.

He said Indonesia's total agricultural production could decline this year if remedial measures were not taken.

Public Works Minister Radinal Moochtar said the government was planning to step up artificial rain-making efforts to help farmers. He said more dams also would be built to store rain water until the next wet season, expected after October.

Meteorologists say the developing drought in Southeast Asia is connected to El Nino, a collection of exceptionally warm and long-lived currents in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of South America that emerges every two to seven years.

The El Nino effect begins in the northern hemisphere's summer and can last for as long as 22 months, bringing drought to some areas and storms and floods to others.

The strongest El Nino this century, which peaked in the winter of 1982-83, is estimated to have caused at least \$13 billion of damage world-wide. Scientists say the El Nino now forming promises to be as equally severe.

The Philippines, fearing its worst drought in recent years, has dug hundreds of wells at farms around the country and is about to set up giant plastic sheets to catch rain water.

Agriculture Department officials said rice and corn farmers, who suffered planting delays because of sparse rains in recent weeks, have asked the government to seed clouds to in a bid to produce rains.

"Even the farmers' standing crops have been affected by lack of water," said Wilfredo Cabeson, chief of the cloud-seeding operations of the Bureau Of Soils and Water Management, said.

But the government said it expected the full impact of the El Nino to be felt on the Philippines economy next year.

The Philippine Weather Bureau said water levels in the country's five major dams had dipped below normal levels because of below-average rainfall in recent months.

In an advisory early this month, it said much of the country experienced little rain between April and July this year due to fewer than usual cyclones.

In contrast, the situation in Thailand appears to be improving after a lack of rain earlier this year devastated the first corn crop, forcing farmers to replant.

"Central and northern areas had been a concern for some time, but the amount of rainfall seems to have improved substantially," a Thai weather forecast bureau official said.

But he added: "Despite the improvement, the average amount of rain in the central region is still lower than expected."

Thailand is the world's largest rice exporter, and the staple is grown mainly in its central, northern and north-eastern areas.

It is also a leading international sugar exporter, but the domestic industry was divided on the impact of the dry spell on the cane crop.

Some officials said at least 15 per cent of this year's sugar harvest had been damaged because it lacked sufficient rain during a crucial development stage, but others said recent increased rainfall would help improve the situation.

SARAJEVO (AFP) The former high civilian representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt, was quoted Sunday as saying that leaders of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic should contact the U.N. war crimes tribunal in the Hague.

"I think it's time that the lawyers of Karadzic and (Bosnian Croat Dario) Kordic contacted officials at the ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia)," Mr. Bildt told the pro-government newspaper Dnevni Avaz.

Kordic led the Bosnian Croats in some of the bloodiest fighting in the 43-month war.

"The best solution for the people accused of war crimes is to give themselves up voluntarily to the ICTY so that they can be judged. If they are innocent, as they are always stating, they have nothing to be afraid of," Mr. Bildt told the paper.

Asked why Karadzic, who has international arrest warrants out for him, has not been arrested yet, Mr. Bildt said: "It's not just Karadzic. The question of war criminals is a broad one and cannot be limited to a single criminal."

"The international community has crossed the rubicon with its action in Prijedor (northwest Bosnia). I was sceptical because I wanted 'operation Karadzic' to go ahead before that operation, and for Karadzic and other war criminals to be arrested in a military operation," said Mr. Bildt, who now lives in Sweden and has been replaced in Bosnia by Spaniard Carlos Westendorp.

Elite British troops operating under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peacekeeping force SFOR swooped on two suspected war criminals in the town of Prijedor on July 10.

Former police chief, Simo Drljaca was shot dead in the raid, while hospital director, Milan Kovacevic was detained without incident and later sent to the Hague to face trial.

The operation led to speculation that NATO-led forces were preparing to snatch Karadzic, who is seen as a major obstacle to the process of reconciliation between Bosnia's former warring factions. The Sunday Times in London said Sunday that a joint British, U.S. and French NATO force had been deployed in Bosnia to seize Karadzic.

It quoted military sources in Sarajevo as saying that a night time "airmobile insertion" exercise carried out Wednesday in the mountains north of Pale, Karadzic's stronghold, was widely seen as a dress rehearsal for the operation.

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Mr. P. J. Connelley, a Republican member of the New York State Assembly, said today that he was "not sure" that the United States would be able to "control" the situation in the Congo. He said that the United States had "a great deal of influence" in the Congo, but that it was "not sure" that it could "control" the situation. He said that the United States had "a great deal of influence" in the Congo, but that it was "not sure" that it could "control" the situation.

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WORK (R) — The two victims of the Jan. 28 TWA flight SQ. 191, which killed all 250 people aboard, have been identified, the Suffolk County, N.Y., Medical Examiner's Office said today.

It has taken forensic scientists more than 2 years to complete the painstaking work of identifying the



A seven-storey building lies on its side after collapsing in Bombay Sunday. Two people died and seven people were injured. The three top storeys of the building were vacant, substantially reducing casualties (Reuters photo)

2 killed, 4 trapped in India house collapse

BOMBAY (R) — Rescuers were searching Sunday for four people believed trapped in debris after a building collapsed in India's commercial capital, authorities said.

"Two people died. Seven were injured and admitted to hospital," a fire brigade official told Reuters. The seven-storey apartment block, in Bombay's northwestern Vile Parle suburb, collapsed late Saturday.

The official said the upper three floors of the structure were vacant when it came crashing down just before midnight.

"We think there are four more people trapped under-

neath," he added. "Operations are underway to get them out."

Many of Bombay's buildings are poorly maintained because the city has frozen rents at 40-year-old levels and landlords have no financial incentive to maintain them. Weakened by winds and heavy rains in the monsoons, dozens of them collapse each year.

Civic officials estimate that more than 15,000 buildings in the city are in imminent danger of collapse because of poor maintenance. But many residents continue living there because they say they have nowhere else to go.

Fighting in northeastern Sri Lanka kills 11

COLOMBO (R) — Fighting between government troops and Tamil Tiger separatists in northeastern Sri Lanka killed at least 11 people, including four soldiers, the Defence Ministry said Sunday.

The soldiers were killed when Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels attacked a military point at Uylankulam village in northwestern Mannar district Saturday, a ministry statement said.

Rebel radio intercepted by the military had indicated

four separatists were killed and 11 wounded, the statement added.

Four soldiers were also wounded in the attack, which occurred some 220 kilometres north of the capital, Colombo.

Three rebels were also killed in northern Jaffna Peninsula in two separate confrontations with troops Saturday, the ministry said.

Meanwhile Sri Lankan Air Force, facing an acute shortage of pilots, plans to bring in women to mainly fly its transport aircraft,

military officials said Sunday.

They said the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) was likely to recruit women pilots by the end of this year.

Officials said the SLAF had 160 pilots to fly its Kfir and Pucara warplanes, helicopter gunships and transport aircraft.

But it needed another 100 pilots by next year, Air Force Chief Oliver Ranasinghe was quoted as saying by the state-owned Sunday Observer newspaper.

Sri Lanka's tiny air force

has lost several warplanes and helicopter gunships this year in combat operations against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The LTTE are fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in the Indian Ocean island's north and east.

The government says more than 50,000 people have been killed in the war, now in its 15th year. LTTE claim the toll is higher.

There was no immediate comment from the LTTE on the latest attacks.

Peru guerrillas reportedly kidnap 29 oil workers

LIMA (R) — Guerrillas from Peru's Maoist Shining Path Movement have kidnapped 29 oil workers — possibly including some foreigners — in a remote jungle zone, police sources said Sunday.

The opposition daily La Republica reported in an early edition that a heavily armed rebel band Friday captured the workers — who were employed by local exploration company CGG working for French oil giant ELF ELPPA — in the Riverine zone of Peru's central jungle.

A national police source in the regional capital of Huancayo confirmed to Reuters that he had received a report from officials on the spot that between 50 or 60 Shining Path rebels had

kidnapped up to 30 workers.

"According to the report, the terrorists threatened them. Some of the workers didn't want to go with them, so they beat them," he said in a telephone interview, adding that army patrols were sweeping the area in search of the hostages.

A journalist in the zone, who asked not to be named, told Reuters in a phone interview that he had confirmed the kidnapping with natives living nearby who witnessed it, and with local authorities. "It seems Shining Path has taken the workers to a secret prison in the jungle," he said.

An anti-terrorist police source, also in Huancayo, confirmed that 29 or 30 workers had been reported

kidnapped, and that army helicopters were searching for them Saturday.

"The information we have is that it is Sendero — the attackers were shouting 'long live Sendero' — although the zone is normally used by the MRTA," he said in a phone interview, referring to Peru's smaller guerrilla movement the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. "We are investigating, but it is very difficult because the terrorists have their hideouts underground."

Shining Path and the MRTA have been highly active in the dense and isolated jungle area, mainly populated by Achaninka Indians, throughout their 17-year war on the state. Anti-terrorist police sources

have said remnants of both groups — severely reduced in recent years as a result of a government offensive — were hiding in the zone.

The MRTA won world notoriety in December 1996 with the kidnapping of hundreds of guests at a Japanese Embassy Party. They held 72 of their highest-profile hostages for 126 days until Peru's military stormed the ambassador's residence, killing the 14 rebels and freeing alive all but one of the captives.

Overshadowed by the hostage crisis, Shining Path had been concentrating on regrouping forces and peasant education work, according to police. It was unclear what motives the kidnapping had.

had set up his new headquarters at the Pakhtakor Collective Farm, 40 kilometres from the Tajik-Uzbek border.

Government troops pushed Col. Khudoberdiyev's forces back to their stronghold at Kurgan-Tyube, 100 kilometres south of Dushanbe, after the warlord's forces had advanced on the capital on July 9.

By Wednesday Col. Khudoberdiyev had agreed to halt his advance and return the brigade to its base.

Col. Khudoberdiyev was a commander in the Popular Front which brought Esmat Rakhmonov to power in Dushanbe in 1992, eject-

ing a government of democratic and Islamic forces.

He then took part in the five-year civil war against the Islamic guerrillas exiled in neighbouring Afghanistan and his rebellion this week appeared to be partly in protest at a recent peace accord signed between Mr. Rakhmonov and the Islamic opposition.

A military official in Dushanbe quoted by ITAR-TASS said that Col. Khudoberdiyev was being joined by up to 500 followers of Yakub Salimov, the former customs chief whose forces clashed with government troops in Dushanbe last weekend.

Hun Sen's forces bombard Cambodian opposition town

CHUNG CHOM PASS (R)

— Forces loyal to Cambodian strongman Hun Sen pounded approaches to the border town of O'smach with mortar and artillery fire Sunday as they closed in on the last major stronghold of opposition royalist forces.

At least 22 mortar rounds and nine artillery shells landed in the town's outskirts during the morning and the Thai army had been moved to full alert in case the fighting or shelling spilled across the Thai border, a Thai army commander said.

Defending royalist troops had ordered civilians to remain in their houses or in bunkers and the number of casualties in the town was not immediately known, he said.

In the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, General Meas Sophea, who heads fighting operations, said government troops had advanced to

within 2-3 kilometres of O'smach.

"We are 2-3 kilometres from O'smach, but because of the density of land mines and booby traps in the area, it is difficult to take O'smach," he told Reuters.

Another military official in Phnom Penh said the government was pressing its advance with infantry but no tanks or heavy equipment due to the terrain. From Cambodia, access to O'smach is via a steep dirt road and the surrounding area is jungle.

Twelve injured government soldiers were flown to the Siem Reap military hospital 60 kilometres to the south of O'smach Sunday.

Three were wounded by mines, three by artillery and four by grenade launchers, hospital officials said.

A colonel in Siem Reap said about 5,000 government troops were now in the O'smach area and a further five divisions were in

Samrong, 40 kilometres south of O'smach.

Government troops had surrounded O'smach, and controlled all but the town and a narrow corridor from O'smach toward the headquarters of the once feared Khmer Rouge guerrilla movement at Anlong Veng about 50 kilometres to the east, he said.

The much weakened Khmer Rouge have sent troops to reinforce royalist positions in O'smach. They fear capture of the town by Hun Sen's forces would give the government an easier advance toward their base of Anlong Veng, Thai army sources said.

The number of Cambodian civilians crowding at the Thai border in the hope of fleeing the fighting had dwindled to a few dozen following the order by royalist commanders for civilians to stay at home.

"They (the royalists) might ask to let the civilians

cross tonight but not in daylight. It is too embarrassing for them...they have been told to stay away from the cameras," said one Thai commander at the border.

On Saturday hundreds of ragged families carrying their possessions crowded around the barbed wired border gates hoping to cross into Thailand. The Thais have promised to let them in if the situation worsens.

About 75 scared civilians attempting to cross the border through surrounding jungle late on Saturday had been sent back to Cambodia, Thai troops said.

Prince Ranariddh's forces have been defending dwindling pockets of territory in the country's northwest since Mr. Hun Sen seized power after two days of bloody fighting in Phnom Penh on July 5-6. The two were formerly co-premiers in a shaky coalition government.

Shuttle crew capture satellite

CAPE CANAVERAL (R)

— The Space Shuttle Discovery picked up a free flying satellite on Saturday, ending a nine day health check on earth's atmosphere.

The satellite, named Crista-Spas, was plucked from orbit by the shuttle's 60-foot long robot arm at 15:13 GMT, as the two craft soared 296 kilometres above the Pacific, north of New Zealand.

"Good job: Discovery," mission control's Ellen Ochoa said. "Congratulations on a very smoothly rendezvous and grapple."

"Crista's done a fantastic job and we're proud to carry her," Mission Commander Curt Brown said later.

Astronaut Jan Davis, operating the robot arm, then gently lowered the 7,000-pound spacecraft into its berth in the shuttle's cargo bay.

The German-built satellite, which was released by the astronauts last week, has been probing earth's atmosphere to learn more about the depletion of the ozone layer.

The mission's scientists said they were delighted with the early results from Crista-Spas.

The satellite's two main instruments made nearly 50,000 atmospheric observations at altitudes ranging from 4.3 to 7 to 185 kilometres.

"It was simply an absolute success," said Klaus Grossmann of the University of Wuppertal, Germany.

The spacecraft's most surprising finding was evidence of much more water vapour in the upper atmosphere than scientists had expected. The results seem to back a controversial theory that the earth is being bombarded by house-sized, water-laden comets thousands of times a day.

"In the sense of going exploring and finding a gold mine, I have to say I think we found it," scientist Robert Conway of the Naval Research Laboratory said.

The only disappointment was that the shuttle's power reserves would not allow an extra day of observations, the researchers told a news conference.

The scientists were eager to get their hands on the data recorded aboard the spacecraft. Only a fraction of its atmospheric measurements were transmitted to the ground.

About 30 gigabytes of information are stored on the spacecraft's recorders, enough to fill about half a tonne of computer floppy disks, Mr. Conway said.

Hundreds of weeping Pakistanis attend renowned singer's funeral prayers

LAHORE (AFP)

— Hundreds of weeping people attended funeral prayers Sunday for renowned Pakistani singer, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, whose body was flown here from London amid emotional scenes.

"Almost everyone had tears in his eyes," both at the mosque and Lahore Airport, a witness said.

Among those attending the funeral prayers at the Darul Darbar Mosque were the governor of Punjab province, Shahid Hamid, Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif, and top government officials.

Khan's fans earlier gathered at the airport as the coffin was handed over to his close relatives including brother Farrukh Fateh Ali Khan and an 11-year-old adopted daughter Nida.

Khan, 49, died of a heart attack Saturday at Cromwell Hospital in London where he was undergoing treatment for liver and kidney ailments, his family said.

He will be buried in the family graveyard at Faisalabad, 140 kilometres west of here late Sunday.

A songwriter, musicologist and teacher, Nusrat was considered to have revived music in Pakistan through a mix of techno and "Qawwali", a form of devotional singing popular in the sub-continent at shrines of Muslim saints.

Scores of the late singer's pupils present at the airport burst into tears as the body was taken out of the Lahore International Airport in an ambulance for Islamic funeral prayers. People trav-



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan

elling in cars, motorcycles, and vans accompanied the ambulance as a pull of gloom descended on music lovers in the country soon after the news of Khan's death.

The All Pakistan Musicians Association has declared a three-day mourning period and announced there will be no recording of any music programmes during that time in memory of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

The internationally acclaimed singer had been honoured in Pakistan and abroad.

Khan was also immensely popular in India where he held concerts and recorded songs for many Hindi films.

The winner of Pride of Performance medal in Pakistan, Khan received the U.N. Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation award for his work in 1995.

He introduced the art of "Qawwali", a rendering of hymns with music, in Europe, the United States and Japan. He retained the touch of sobriety and dignity in the

mystic poetry while blending Western and Eastern music.

After the Islamic prayers at Darul Darbar Mosque, Khan's body was taken to the national monument Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore where some 5,000 mourners filled the sprawling grounds.

The grief-stricken crowd waved as the body was flown in an army helicopter to his home town Faisalabad.

Khan, 49, was to celebrate his 50th birthday on Aug. 24. The Pakistani textile city of Faisalabad, was plunged into grief and streams of people continued to visit his home, residents said.

Shops and markets were closed and the few tea-stalls opened, repeatedly played one of his hit songs "Khaiy daray na wachhay" (may no one suffer the agony of missing a beloved).

Meanwhile India's media and performing artists Sunday joined the mourning for Khan who symbolised close cultural relations between two nations usually in the news for diplomatic rows and the war-torn have fought.

All leading newspapers carried front-page stories on the death Saturday of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

"It is very unfortunate that I could not sing for such a great music wizard," the Press Trust of India quoted the nation's best known playback singer, Lata Mangeshkar, as saying.

"He not only composed tunes which were like a new breeze to Hindi film music but was a great singer himself," said Ms. Mangeshkar.

Tajik troops seek to block warlord's escape route

DUSHANBE (AFP) — Government troops were Sunday heading towards the camp of Tajik warlord Colonel Makhmud Khudoberdiyev with a mission to prevent his rebels fleeing into Uzbekistan or Afghanistan, government military sources said.

Col. Khudoberdiyev was stripped of his command Wednesday following an aborted advance on the capital.

However the warlord, an ethnic Uzbek, refused to relinquish command of his elite armoured brigade, and left with his soldiers to set up a fortified camp in the mountains not far from the

Uzbek and Afghan borders. The rebels say they have no intention of fleeing the country.

On Saturday, they threatened to "fight to the bitter end" as government forces occupied their former main base which they have abandoned.

International bodies including the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and aid agencies evacuated their personnel from the region Saturday evening, the Interfax agency reported.

A presidential spokesman said Col. Khudoberdiyev, who is the main warlord in southwestern Tajikistan,

had set up his new headquarters at the Pakhtakor Collective Farm, 40 kilometres from the Tajik-Uzbek border.

Government troops pushed Col. Khudoberdiyev's forces back to their stronghold at Kurgan-Tyube, 100 kilometres south of Dushanbe, after the warlord's forces had advanced on the capital on July 9.

By Wednesday Col. Khudoberdiyev had agreed to halt his advance and return the brigade to its base.

Col. Khudoberdiyev was a commander in the Popular Front which brought Esmat Rakhmonov to power in Dushanbe in 1992, eject-

Last two TWA 800 victims identified

NEW YORK (R) — The last two victims of the crash of TWA flight 800, which killed all 230 people aboard, have been identified, the Suffolk County, N.Y., Medical Examiner's Office said Saturday.

It has taken forensic scientists more than a year to complete the painstaking task of identifying the

remains of the victims through DNA analysis.

The two victims were Janet O'Hara, 39, of Irvington, N.Y., and Jean Jacques Zara, 58, a French government scientist.

O'Hara's husband Jack O'Hara, a former executive producer of ABC TV sports and their 14-year-old daughter also were killed in the crash. They

were identified last year.

The families of both victims were notified of the identification two days ago, officials said.

The Boeing 747 exploded in mid-air 11 minutes after taking off from New York for Paris on July 17, 1996, and plunged into the Atlantic Ocean off New York's Long Island.

Officials from the

Course For Training Rehabilitation Worker Volunteers



Three physiotherapists and 1 occupational therapist employed by the Outreach Team of Al-Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped Children successfully completed a series of training courses for volunteers working with children with physical disabilities during the second week of August. These courses were held in Palestinian refugee camps and Jordanian villages. The courses consisted of theoretical lectures and practical sessions.

After the courses, the volunteers will be expected to be able to continue

with therapy programmes planned with the therapists, advise parents about play and learning materials and work effectively with parents to assist with their disabled children's development.

The present course was held in Talbea Community. Based Rehabilitation Centre where 18 volunteers were trained. The next course is planned for volunteers from Deir Abu Sased and the surrounding villages.

The picture is of the course participants training as rehabilitation volunteers at Talbea CBR Centre.

Jordan Times

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Act now, or lose all

THERE IS apparently no let up yet in the deteriorating situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip despite several efforts and interventions the latest of which was His Majesty King Hussein's summit talks in Aqaba several days ago and the visit to the area of U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross. The easing of sanctions being imposed on the Palestinians has not contributed enough to change the overall climate in the area. With Israel still maintaining its freeze on the payment of taxes and customs collected for the Palestinians, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has not been able to pay salaries of 80,000 civil servants and about 30,000 policemen whom Israel would like to see deployed to combat terrorism. Equally affected are some 80,000 Palestinian labourers and merchants who earn their livelihood by working in and with Israel. This is not to mention the dire economic effects of the punitive measures still being slammed on the Palestinian territories.

Out of desperation and after running out of options, the PNA is poised to apply sanctions of its own against Israel by boycotting Israeli goods. With the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat going on the record as rejecting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's demand that the PNA arrest a number of Islamists, the stage is set for a further deterioration rather than a relaxation of tension. Arafat came very close to predicting an outbreak of a new intifada on a scale that exceeds the intensity of the major Palestinian uprising between 1987 and 1993.

In his meeting at Aqaba summit with the Israeli prime minister, His Majesty warned that the area lives through a dangerous moment. The events and developments over the past six months are fast pushing the region into a new major crisis point from which no party may escape unscathed.

In actual terms, the fortunes of peace and the momentum of the peace process came to a sudden halt when Netanyahu was elected as the new Israeli leader in 1996. Damascus has recently stated that there is no hope ever of waging peace with Israel as long as the Likud Party calls the shots in Israel. The Egyptians are also like-minded in their assessment that Netanyahu is simply bad news for peace in the Middle East.

Given the hardened position of Israel, it seems improbable that U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright would succeed where all others have failed unless President Bill Clinton acts more forcefully in dealing with the Israeli leaders. President Clinton must be aware that at least half of the Israelis are against their current prime minister not to mention the deep divisions among Jews in the U.S. and elsewhere. By showing the seriousness that the situation requires now the Clinton administration would risk antagonising neither all the Jews of the world nor most of the Israelis who believe in peace and are willing to pay the necessary price for it. President Clinton should act now. Otherwise everything that has been attained over the past six years would go down the drain.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily called on the government to launch an intensive, nationwide campaign designed to eradicate illiteracy in Jordan by the year 2000. Between 1991 and 1997, Jordan's illiteracy rate dropped from 19 per cent to 13 per cent, according to the Department of Statistics, and this is a good progress, but it is not enough, said Ghassan Abdul Khaleq. The writer said that if Jordan wants to enter the 21st century, it should completely eradicate illiteracy which delays and slows down socio-economic progress. Compared to other countries, the writer said, Jordan's literacy rates are quite good, but more efforts have to be made to prevent school dropouts and to encourage illiterates to acquire education, which is offered them free of charge. As to spending on science and technology, which are vital elements for development, it stands at four and seven per cent, respectively, in terms of the gross national product, and spending on industry and scientific research stands at eight and 12 per cent respectively, he pointed out. The writer said that these are poor rates which can by no means help achieve Jordanians' aspirations.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Jordan might not get on the new industrial revolution train

THE NINETIES have seen a new industrial revolution. This time, as some economists would say, the trend in developed countries is to "dematerialise" their economies. Advanced economies are moving away from steel and coal to microprocessors and software, thus shifting emphasis from manufacturing to services. Jordan, it seems, stands to lose the opportunity to dematerialise and become a knowledge-based economy, which would be a disaster. The information superhighway and information technology may be the only wagon that could carry a competitive Jordan into the next century.

The nineties have seen many great changes in the world economy: a U.S. knowledge-based economic growth that seems to last for ever as it continues into its seventh year; a loss of manufacturing jobs in most of the industrial countries, as manufacturing jobs (which pay less on average than services jobs) move to cheap labour (developing) countries; a demise of regulatory practices in the face of the information superhighway; a blurring of the divide between services and manufacturing, as consumer based manufacturing is becoming more service oriented via the Internet and electronic mail (consumers can give their specifications or measurements to manufacturers through the Internet and have their brand names practically custom-made and delivered to their place of residence — if this is not service, what is?); and the expansion of the international market, as the consumer becomes better informed about a greater variety of products from all over the world.

Jordan, on the other hand, was on the verge of becoming a telecommunications hub in the first half of the nineties and a possible leader in the new industrial revolution. It could have gained relative leadership in the area of information technology by doing "all the right moves," which were so available. But it did not.

The telecommunications sector should have been privatised, according to the original plans. Having slowed down the privatisation of this valuable sector may have given Jordan competitive disadvantage and disabled it from riding the superhighway. Protectionists and their fear

of privatisation have led to the slowing of progress in this sector, which is the most important sector in the whole economy.

Instead of moving towards competition in the provision of basic telephony — which, among other things, would have guaranteed that the quality of the lines would improve enough to make the use of the Internet more available — the present monopoly continues to operate with a "business as usual," nonchalant approach. Many consumers complain that the privatisation of the Telecommunications Corporation has made the service worse. They cite the mishaps in the billing system, of which many people have suffered lately, the repair delays, which have become longer than before, as the same cost-cutting mentality continues to prevail in the recently corporatised monopoly; the deteriorating quality of the lines, which prohibits linkage to the Internet, and the issuance of new numbers without proper notification or information to callers (new numbers are advertised for a day in the local newspapers; if you do not buy the newspaper that day, you will never know the new number) is extremely harmful to businesses as they lose orders, etc. But most importantly, not having competition may prevent the universality — wide availability — of the basic telephony network and prevent the development of a knowledge-based economic growth, which is badly needed.

Jordan's only hope is in the area of information technology. Its market size is small, relative to Israel and Egypt. Jordan is justifying a competitive advantage in manufacturing. Egypt enjoys greater economies of scale than Jordan because it has more than twelve times the population. Israel has a stronger market than Jordan because the Israeli gross national product (GNP) is fifteen times higher than that of Jordan. (The GNP per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP), measured in 1994 international dollars, in Israel, Egypt and Jordan was 15,690, 4,305, and 4,290, respectively.)

The information superhighway would make all these traditional disadvantages insignificant if only the telecommunications market would be liberalised.

'Reassessing where freedom of information ends and right to privacy begins'

By Carole A. Lane

LOS ANGELES — Sitting in my home office, what could I find out about you? What could you learn about me? How deeply could we probe into each other's lives? The answers will probably startle you.

Within a few hours, with only a name and address, I can find out what you do for a living, the names and ages of your spouse and children, what kind of car you drive, the value of your home and how much you pay in taxes on it. I can make a good guess at your income.

There is not a lot of privacy left, and what little remains is disappearing fast.

As someone who has made a living doing research for businesses, private investigators, financial institutions and law firms, I can attest to the fact that the Internet has made personal data more available, and made us more aware of how easy it is to have our privacy invaded.

But there are perfectly valid reasons to seek information about others — reasons that

we are too quick to forget when privacy advocates overreact to the rare instances when security computer systems are broken into by hackers.

For example, what if you want to make sure that the new nanny you have hired doesn't have a reckless driving record or a history of driving under the influence? With the click of a mouse, using services like the American Information Network (www.amerinfo.com), I can check almost anybody's driving records in the United States.

Suppose you want to find out if Prince Charming really owns a castle. Services like KnowX (www.knowx.com) provide property records, stock holdings and registration information for yachts and private jets. If that does not do the job, subscription services such as CDB Infoseek (www.cdb.com) allow searches for property refinancing, construction loans, fictitious business name filings, federal, state and county tax lines, and uniform commercial code filings (to locate assets that have been used as security for loans or commercial transactions). This service

also will help track bankruptcy filings and civil court judgments.

Say you are an employer worried about being held criminally negligent if a customer is harmed by one of your employees. Computerised databases allow you to screen job applicants for security reasons, or to verify resumes.

If you are a banker or chief executive officer of a national collection agency, consumer credit databases can help track assets, debts and investments, identify potential clients, weigh credit risks and locate "skips" — debtors who move in the hope of evading you.

You wonder where an old friend, lover or deadbeat dad is now? Free-finder databases have multiplied.

It is not a free-for-all out there. Many on-line databases charge a fee. There is a broad range of charges, depending on the vendor and the market targeted for business.

Why shouldn't we keep all these records private? The basic reason is that they allow us to check on officials, identify criminals who could be placed in positions of responsibility, and track down debtors.

When we seek to limit access to personal records, we must do so with the knowledge that this could virtually erase the history of those who have swindled and defrauded people before, and make it impossible for employers to protect their staff, their company's or customers' assets or the public from a dangerous or unscrupulous employee.

At the moment, it seems to me, the ability to access these records does far more to protect people than to endanger them.

Personal information can always be misused. People who have had their credit cards stolen know that access to personal data can put one in danger. Because of this trend, we need to reassess where freedom of information ends and the right to privacy begins. It is one of the most difficult public policy questions we face.

The writer is author of "Naked in Cyberspace: How to Find Personal Information Online." This article is reprinted from the Los Angeles Times.

The net should be kept free for business, wealth and jobs

By Robert D. Hormats

NEW YORK — With his call for a minimally regulated, secure and duty-free environment for Internet information flows and electronic commerce, Bill Clinton will have a profound impact on governance, the openness of societies and the integration of economies around the world. His "Framework for Global Electronic Commerce," unveiled on July 1, can be one of his fundamental foreign policy legacies.

The administration's initiative can accelerate a process that will enable hundreds of millions of people to harness the power of the technologies of the emerging global information network — the Internet and the World Wide Web. By pursuing greater openness of economies to flows of information and commerce, it will further integrate national markets.

And it will lead to the creation of countless new jobs in an explosion of new technologies and the commerce that they will facilitate.

The very nature of global production, distribution, sales, advertising and finance will be permanently changed. The framework confirms the enormous economic and

social promise of the Internet, while recognising that government's greatest contribution is to let private individuals and businesses lead the way.

The era of big government is over. In the case of the Internet, it is deemed by the president to be downright counterproductive. Government's role should be to ensure competition, protect intellectual property and privacy, prevent fraud, foster transparency and facilitate dispute resolution — not to regulate.

But the Internet can reach its full potential only if it can become truly global. The challenge for the United States is to convince other governments of the wisdom of its approach and to persuade them to implement policies consistent with it.

The time to do that is now — before regulators who do not understand the unique attributes of the Internet impose excessive regulations, and before revenue-hungry governments seek to extract new taxes. Before too long, these could become embedded in national laws and policies, stifling the Internet and its promise.

The commerce, information and entertainment that flow

over the Internet, and the international rules needed to protect intellectual property, ensure privacy and facilitate competition, could form the warp and woof of the fabric that binds societies together in the next century.

But this is far from an inevitability. First, these societies must see an interest in weaving that fabric.

One of the greatest obstacles to creating an open global information environment is not so much that governments resist the economic competition it triggers but that they are concerned about the social and political implications of free flows of information and ideas across their borders. How the clash of values created by the Internet is resolved will determine its long-term economic prospects.

For most Americans, living as we do in an open society, it is axiomatic that citizens of all nations, like ourselves, will be better off economically, socially and politically if they have access to the international information, commercial contacts and diversified cultures that the Internet provides. To many countries it is not.

The Internet's greatest enemies are government censorship, regulation and taxation.

For any number of reasons, governments might see fit to abuse their powers in each.

The Internet erodes government control over information. It joins the printing press, radio, television and the fax in the pantheon of technologies of freedom. Of these, it is the most dispersed globally and the least controllable.

It promotes freedom from government as the most influential source and arbiter of information. It gives citizens access to entertainment or material that governments or private citizens might find offensive, a concern shared by those in the United States who supported the Communications Decency Act (just struck down by the Supreme Court).

Persuading governments of the virtues of permitting their citizens to be on-line and connected with millions of people outside their borders through the Internet and the Web cannot be done by diplomatic pressure or lofty rhetoric about the virtues of globalisation.

Moreover, the natural leader in selling the Internet and the virtues of electronic commerce, the United States, is hampered because its dominant position in software and

hardware, the deregulated telecommunications sector and world-class entertainment and content makes it suspect in some quarters abroad.

To overcome resistance, the United States will need to work with advocates of economic growth and reform in other major countries — particularly businesses, scientists, entrepreneurs and students. Its strongest argument will be that popular support for governments depends heavily on their ability to create jobs and growth. Restrictions on flows of information and electronic commerce are incompatible with that objective.

Businesses need real-time, on-line information on changes in tastes, cost of materials, consumers' needs, competitors' prices and financing opportunities abroad. They will need to be connected to the international information infrastructure to participate in the tens of billions of dollars' worth of electronic commerce that will take place at the turn of the century.

And the foreign investors whom all nations seek to attract will require connections to global information, the world market and their

Human Rights File

Palestinians may have played the wrong game

By Waleed M. Sadi

JUDGING BY the events that have happened since the Madrid conference on the Middle East, in 1991, the cards have been obviously stacked against the Palestinian leader and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) right from the start. The best evidence of this assessment are the results of pre- and post-Oslo accords.

It is, after all, the outcome of any policy that determines its soundness and credibility, more than anything else.

After nearly four years since the Oslo agreements, the PNA has really nothing to show for. Whether Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was deliberately led astray or into a trap is academic and does not actually matter now. What is important is that the consequences of the Oslo pact, whether in their current or projected state, are disastrous in effect, if not in themselves.

With the benefit of hindsight, the Palestinian side may have committed the first cardinal error when it opted to delink its negotiating process from the Jordanian side. As it turned out, the Jordanian party enjoys a much stronger bargaining position with Israel than the Palestinian side. This is demonstrated by the relative successes that Jordan attained in its negotiating process with the Israeli side, as compared with the absolute failure on the part of the Palestinian side. Having opted to put sub-national interests before national objectives, the Palestinian side was left nearly helpless and powerless to strike an acceptable deal with the Israelis.

The late Prime Minister Wasfi Al Tal once told me that the greatest calamity would befall the Arab World if Egypt opts to go it alone with Israel and negotiate a separate peace with it. The rest of the Arab parties, he cautioned, would be rendered an easy prey to Israel should that happen. "The beads will fall loose," Prime Minister Tal warned, if that moment arrives. Sure enough, the beads did fall apart when Cairo struck a separate deal with Israel in 1979, leaving the other Arab parties most vulnerable.

The Palestinian side did

not help much when it, too, followed in the footsteps of Egypt and struck what it thought was a good deal for the Palestinians and their territories.

Now we all know better. Delinking the Jordanian bargaining stance from that of the Palestinians left the road wide open for Israel to do what it wishes with the Palestinians. Given the kind of revelations that Israel has now made known about its vision for the final status talks, Israel aims to give responsibility for the maximum number of Palestinians on the minimum amount of territorial "concessions." The PNA is therefore not poised to salvage much of the occupied territories unless a miracle happens along the way.

Admittedly, it is too late in the hour to roll back past events, even though there is now a chorus of voices in the occupied areas calling for a more visible Jordanian involvement to help salvage the situation from utter despair. Jordan has already entered into a separate peace treaty with Israel and, seemingly, there is nothing that could be done now to place a Jordanian bet on the Palestinian front. Jordan has got recognised borders with Israel and thus succeeded in putting an end to the Israeli dream for additional expansions into the Arab World.

Israel has also taken from Jordan what it wants, most in terms of recognition and warm peaceful relations, and no amount of Jordanian jockeying for position on behalf of the PNA is likely to bear fruit.

The PNA is effectively on its own now, with very little room for manoeuvre. The Arab World can still apply some marginal pressure on Israel, especially Egypt and Jordan, but in the final analysis, it is the PNA's own bargaining position which will dictate the shape and form of the final Palestinian-Israeli settlement, if the parties ever arrive at that moment; unless, of course, something very ingenious could still be contemplated and worked out to reposition Jordan in the negotiating game so that most, if not all, of the West Bank can still be retrieved from Israeli occupation and domination.

headquarters.

America has taken the initiative in global institutions such as the World Trade Organisation and the OECD to set high standards for openness of the Internet, to reach agreements to protect copyrights, patents, trademarks and electronic contracts, to set limits on regulation and to obtain pledges to eschew taxation of electronic commerce. It seeks to develop a "uniform commercial code" for electronic commerce.

If the major nations accept these standards, more and more governments now reluctant to do so will feel compelled to adhere to them, or risk falling behind in this economically powerful technology.

By hardening international political, ideological and economic barriers, the Berlin wall became the most prominent symbol of the cold war era. By promoting free global flows of information, ideas and business, the Internet can become the most prominent symbol of the post-cold war era.

The writer is vice chairman of Goldman, Sachs (International). The above article is reprinted from The Washington Post.

feature!
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Why do we live in terror?

By Frank Furedi

IT WAS only a matter of time before someone raised the spectre of some environmental peril posed by the construction of the Millennium Dome in south London. Warnings of impending disasters are now routinely made in relation to almost every proposed development. So when Greenpeace warned that the Millennium Dome will be poisonous and threatened to disrupt its construction, it was giving yet another expression to society's addiction to fear.

The transformation of the New Millennium Experience into a threat to the safety of the people of Greenwich follows a predictable pattern. We seem incapable of embracing innovation or new experience without recasting it as a risk.

The fear of risk feeds on itself. And safety has become the fundamental value of the nervous nineties. Hardly a week goes by without some new danger to the individual being reported, and another safety measure proposed.

A flick through recent headlines makes the point: "Green dome threat," screams the Mirror. "Hormone linked to breast cancer," booms the Times; don't send your children to Oxford, it is not a safe place," cautions the daily Telegraph. Even the daily Guardian is hooked on fear. "Nannies danger to children," it warned.

A wide network of charities and organisations has grown up offering advice on all aspects of personal safety. The trend, most clearly expressed through the institutionalisation of the helpline phenomenon, has made a major impact on contemporary culture.

"What are the risks?" and "what are the side effects?" are questions posed to an ever-expanding list of subjects. Such concerns are not merely expressed in relation to the high-profile dangers — BSE, nuclear radiation, potential environmental catastrophes. Every new product, from the mobile phone to computer games, is invariably put through an anxious calculus of risk. There is a compulsion to anticipate and pre-empt adverse outcomes.

The "what if" question has led experts to speculate about the special danger of abuse faced by children conceived by in vitro fertilisation (IVF). The absence of any factual evidence has failed to inhibit this search for the worst-case scenario. Reports have suggested that some potential parents are allowed to go forward for IVF treatment without assessing whether they could turn into abusers of their children.

In a similar vein, the Internet has been represented as a potential site for major calamities. There has been much press comment about so-called "cyber-terrorism" and the threat to society's moral well-being from pornography and paedophile rings. There is even a self-help group called Caught in the Net for those suffering from "Internet Addiction Syndrome."

Once a preoccupation with safety has been made routine and banal, no area of human endeavour can be immune from its influence. Activities that were hitherto seen as healthy and fun — such as enjoying the sun — are now declared to be major health risks. Moreover, even activities that have been pursued precisely because they contain an element of danger are now reinterpreted from the perspective of safety consciousness. Pressure groups are demanding that new safety measures be introduced in mountain-climbing.

No human experience is immune from fear. We fear that the lottery will turn Britain into a nation of gambling addicts. Fear drives parents to spy on their children's nannies. We fear that our children will be kidnapped by strangers. We are anxious about bullies in schools and in the workplace.

Every bit of public space is saturated by fear. Security has become a major concern

in hospitals, schools, universities and doctors' surgeries.

In our cars we fear road rage. And even in the privacy of our homes we fear violent men and out-of-control mothers. Research shows that although anxieties about risk are often disproportionate to the real dangers facing us, they can have a major impact on the way we conduct our lives. Probably it is the smaller, routine mini-panics — not the sensational outburst of publicity about flesh-eating bugs — which have most influenced changes in our lifestyle.

"Every bit of public space is saturated by fear. Security has become a major concern in hospitals, schools, universities and doctors' surgeries. In our cars we fear road rage. And even in the privacy of our homes we fear violent men and out-of-control mothers. Research shows that although anxieties about risk are often disproportionate to the real dangers facing us, they can have a major impact on the way we conduct our lives. Probably it is the smaller, routine mini-panics — not the sensational outburst of publicity about flesh-eating bugs — which have most influenced changes in our lifestyle."

Every parent of a young infant is plagued by the fear that cot death or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) might strike down their child. High-profile campaigns publicising the syndrome have ensured that the British public is highly sensitive — sensitised even — to this affliction.

Concern about cot death is a frequent topic of discussion among new parents. New mothers in particular often reveal a sense of powerlessness when confronted by the threat to their baby. And yet cot death is very rare. Even though the syndrome is ill-defined and is used to explain any infant death for which there is no reliable explanation, on average fewer than 400 babies die from it out of the 688,000 live births every year.

A report published by Families For Freedom argues that it is "ironic that the concern about SIDS has arisen in the

context of an overall decline in infant mortality." During the past two decades the number of infant deaths in Britain halved from 12 to 6.2 per 1,000 live births. And yet alarm about the health of babies is rising steadily, with doctors claiming that parents are becoming more and more anxious about the well-being of their children.

Panics about health risks have had a disproportionate impact on the quality of life of women. Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) provides a classic example of how a statistically insignificant condition was turned into a major scare

campaign which has affected the lives of millions of women. Public concern about TSS has led to significant changes in women's buying habits. TSS was linked to tampons after a number of cases in the United States occurred in women using high-absorbency tampons — and it remains the case that tampon users seem to be particularly prone. Yet nobody has established what the link is. Research in this area does not suggest a causal relation. Even pressure groups devoted to raising awareness about this condition concede that about half the reported cases have nothing to do with menstruation at all. Infections after surgery are a common cause, as are burns and gardening injuries. Some women who are stricken with TSS are not even tampon users.

Not only is the relationship between TSS and tampons far from clear; this highly publicised disease is exceptionally rare. According to the U.K. Public Health Laboratory Service, there were only 162 reported cases of TSS in the eight years up to 1993. Of these, just over 50 per cent were related to menstruation.

When one considers that there are about 14 million tampon-using, menstruating women, the chances of getting TSS from using a tampon this year is one in 700,000. If you are one of the unlucky few, a further comfort should be that the illness is curable. There were seven menstrual-related deaths from TSS between 1985 and 1993; an average of less than one a year.

Tampons, which were once a symbol of freedom for women, have become stigmatised as a health hazard. Apprehensions about using them are particularly strong among young women — an increasing proportion of whom are likely to favour sanitary towels as a more "natural" option.

A similar pattern is evident in young women's reaction to the oral contraceptive pill. In the sixties and seventies the pill was associated with women's liberation. Yet today, following recent panics about the pill's safety, women's magazines in Britain seem obsessed with its drawbacks rather than its advantages. The Birth Control Trust claims that since 1993 the use of the pill among women in their 20s — the age when they are most likely to have an unwanted pregnancy — has fallen by 10 per cent.

Sixty per cent of women who change from the pill to a barrier method are motivated by concern about health risks; yet the modern pill is safer than ever. Today's commonly used brands contain a fraction of the hormones used by women who took the pill in the seventies. Women's health is far more likely to suffer from unwanted pregnancy than from taking the pill.

The culture of fear has had a particularly significant impact on women. But as the growing popularity of men's health magazines indicates, it has not left masculinity untouched. Take the spate of reports which suggested that the sperm count of British men was falling due to some unspecified pollutants. The evidence was far from conclusive, yet society appears to have been disposed to leap to the worst possible interpretation. In contrast, a report pub-



lished in February which questioned the doom thesis and contended that "overall, sperm counts have been on the rise since 1971" was barely discussed in the media.

So why has this inflated sense of danger come about? Any attempt at an explanation must inevitably be schematic. But one factor at play could be a collective striving to make sense of the uncertainty created by fundamental changes in human relations. The weakening of traditional

forms of solidarity — family and class — has been widely commented on. The consequence of this process has been an intense individuation of every day life, forcing people into situations where little can be taken for granted.

In a world ever more devoid of certainty, hitherto unexceptional encounters are increasingly perceived as risky, even dangerous. It is a world of strangers, where safety takes on a special meaning and where fear acquires a dynam-

ic of its own.

Commercial factors may also be operating. There can be little doubt that the culture of fear has been seized upon by astute entrepreneurs. Products and services that are linked to risk avoidance are doing well. In the U.K., bottled water has been the fastest growth sector in the drinks market while the personal security and safety industries are booming.

Products are often marketed not for what they do but for

the security they offer. So car phones are sold as safety devices to protect women who fear violent attacks driving home. Not to mention the insurance industry which has been quick to offer a variety of new policies against an expanding range of risks from redundancy at work to a bewildering variety of possible accidents.

The culture of fear is a defining feature of modern Britain — and it particularly affects the young. This is not surprising since those who grew up in the eighties have been systematically exposed to the contemporary obsession with risks.

That is why young women are particularly prone to panics of the pill and TSS variety. It may also help to explain why a growing proportion of young men, aged 18-24, is opting to stay at home and live with their families, and why university graduates looking for their first job are so keen to ask probing questions about company pensions.

It all sounds very sensible. But if young people, traditionally the most adventurous section of the population, become more and more reluctant to take chances, what future is there for society?

Of course human beings, and especially the young, will continue to live on the edge. The sadness is that we are creating a world where experimentation has become stigmatised; it no longer conveys a sense of adventure or heroism. Increasingly, those who chance their luck stand morally condemned for putting others at risk. Instead of the hero we worship the survivor. And a society that celebrates its ability to survive has little to offer to those who actually want to live.

Frank Furedi teaches sociology at the University of Kent. His book, *Culture of Fear: Risk Taking and the Morality of Low Expectation*, has just been published by Cassell. This article is reprinted from the Guardian Weekly.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

PROJECT MANAGER

GULF OF AQABA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN — JORDAN

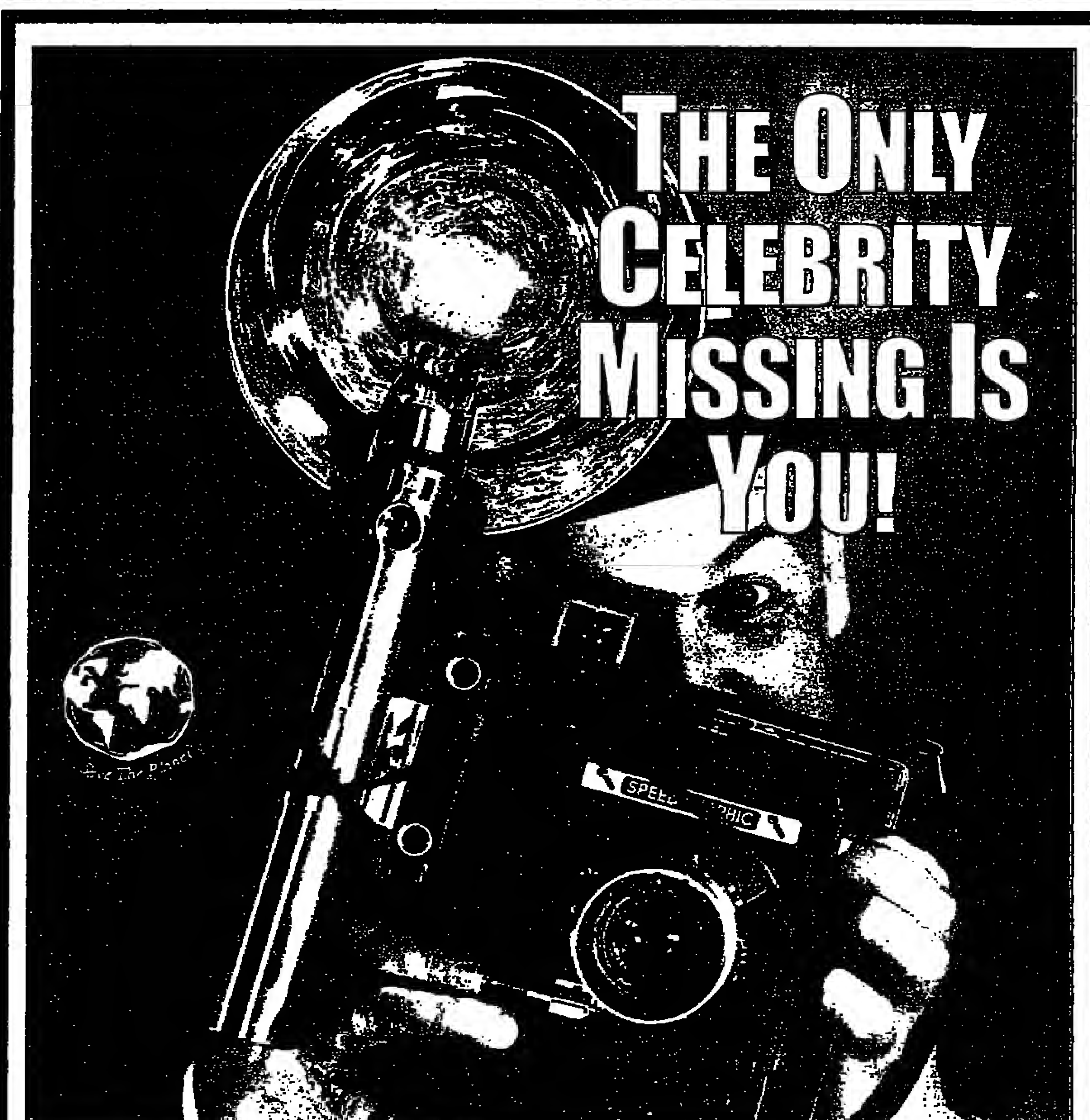
Full-time resident Project Manager sought to manage implementation of a project to build institutional and regulatory capacity for marine and coastal resources protection in Jordan's Aqaba Region. Project financing total \$3.5 million over three years, with \$2.7 million provided by the Global Environment Facility.

Project Manager will be responsible for developing and implementing a management plan for all project components including: hiring and training of staff for the environmental department; implementation and enforcement of regulations for ship-based and industrial pollution; finalisation of environmental impact assessment/coastal zone management guidelines and application of EIS/CZM guidelines to new development activities; establishment of a managed multi-use marine protected area (MPA) including staff development, construction and maintenance of MPA facilities, implementation of MPA regulations and development of public awareness tools; and implementation of measures to finalise ground water pollution from municipal sewage and other land-based sources, inter-agency coordination within Jordan as well as facilitation of contacts with other Gulf-bordering states will be key features of the project. Project Manager will also be responsible for preparing progress reports in accordance with World Bank/GEF requirements, and for overseeing project finances, assisted by a Project Procurement/Disbursements Adviser.

Qualification should include graduate degree in environmental field; strong executive and managerial skills, as demonstrated by prior experience in project management, and by strong professional experience in managing international environmental protection and/or environmental development projects. English language fluency and computer skills required. Arabic proficiency desired.

Position to commence immediately. Salary negotiable and depends on qualification and experience. For further inquiries and submission of CVs not later than August 31, 1997, contact Aqaba Region Authority

P.O. Box 21
Aqaba-Jordan
Fax: 962 3 314206 Tel: 962 3 314200
Ref: Environment



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THE HARD ROCK!

Hard Rock Cafe (härd räk ca-fé) n. 1. palace of crave 2. amazing food 3. the temple of music entertainment 4. award winning casual dining in fun-loving atmosphere 5. mission:

Hard Rock
CAFE

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LOVE ALL SERVE ALL ...
SAVE THE PLANET



Egypt aims to compete with Asian 'tigers'

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt, a growing magnet for foreign investment, wants to compete with the "tiger" economies of South East Asia but has a long way to go before it can count itself above the rank of developing country, Western experts say.

Several reports published recently have praised economic reforms introduced by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak since last year, especially liberalisation of the financial sector and privatisation.

The reforms are beginning to bear fruit and Egypt is becoming an attractive emerging market, they say. One study by American bank Merrill Lynch, entitled "From Ancient Evenings to the Dawn of the Reform Era," said: "The foreign investor has been persuaded that he will make good profit on money invested in Egypt."

Bank President Herbert Allison said Cairo was

poised to become a regional financial centre and that he plans to open a permanent branch in the Egyptian capital.

The U.S. embassy here also released a glowing report of Egypt's liberalisation programme. "World attention is now focused on Egypt as an emerging market," it said.

And the representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Cairo, Arvind Subramanian, said foreign investors now considered Egypt a safer bet for investment than some Asian or Latin American countries.

At the start of the year, credit rating agencies Standard and Poors and Moody's notched up Egypt's ratings, especially on its long-term debt, provoking strong interest from investors.

The International Finance Corporation, the main source of information on emerging stock markets, includes Cairo on its index. Nevertheless, while praising

the efforts of Prime Minister Kamal Al Ganzuri's government, which was reshuffled last month to give a new boost to reforms, experts admit that there is some way to go before Egypt can compete with the so-called "tigers."

The growth rate is forecast to rise above five per cent this year but it needs to reach seven or eight per cent, as in many Asian countries, before it has a significant impact on unemployment and poverty, still endemic in the country.

Investments, the main source of growth here, would have to grow to 35 per cent of the gross domestic product from the current rate of 18.7 per cent.

Foreign investment, which has grown to \$1.5 billion since 1996, \$800 million of it in direct investment, is still insufficient, experts say. And the privatisation programme designed to attract further investment needs to be speeded up, they say.

Only 46 companies have been privatised or semi-privatised so far out of the 314 firms to be sold off by 2000. The programme has brought \$3 billion into Egyptian coffers and is expected to make \$15 billion in total.

Last week, the government announced a new wave of 11 textile, banking, electrical, cement and oil companies to be privatised.

Some macro-economic indicators are in Egypt's favour — external debt is under control at \$28 billion, inflation has been pushed below 10 per cent, the Egyptian pound is fairly strong and foreign currency reserves, which stood at \$20 billion in May, have never been so large.

But to consolidate its economic rise and ward off the threat of social tension, Egypt will have to build a social security system and improve its health and education systems, the IMF said.

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN MINISTRY OF ENERGY & MINERAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT OF THERMAL POWER PROJECT ON A BUILD-OWN-OPERATE BASIS

ANNOUNCEMENT

NOTICE FOR PREQUALIFICATION OF SPONSORS (**RFO/RFI DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY**)

THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES (MEMR), an organisation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, issued a Notice for Prequalification of Sponsors in mid-July, 1997 ("Prequalification Notice"), announcing its intention to have its next Thermal Power Project, which would include a 400 kW, 132 kV switchyard and support facilities, procured on a build-own-operate basis through international competitive bidding based on a detailed Request for Proposal document. The Prequalification Notice stated that MEMR would seek to prequalify interested firms and/or joint ventures ("Interested Firms") based on "Qualification Statements" and that the prequalification document containing the requirements for such Statements would be issued in August.

MEMR hereby announces that the prequalification document will be available on and after August 17, 1997. Interested Firms may pick up the document at the MEMR location listed below for JD35,000 or US\$50, or at the K&M location listed below for US\$50. Alternatively, Interested Firms may contact either of the contact persons specified at such locations on or after August 16 and request that the prequalification document be sent via express courier to the firm for a total fee of JD70,000 or US\$100 (MEMR location) or US\$100 (K&M location). Payment may be made in cash or by certified cheque or money order payable to, in the case of obtaining the document from MEMR, the "Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources" and in the case of obtaining the document from K&M, "K&M Engineering and Consulting Corporation."

1. K&M Engineering and Consulting Corporation
2001 L Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20036 USA
Attn: Mr. Guy Knowle, Manager of Procurement Services
Tel: (202) 728-0390
Fax: (202) 872-9174
E-mail: gknowle@mail.com
Office Hours: M-F, 8:45 AM to 5:30 PM.

2. Engr. Ahmad Bashir
Secretary General
Ministry of Energy & Mineral Resources
P.O. Box 140027
Jabal Amman-7th Circle
Amman-Jordan
Tel: 962-6-828971
Fax: 962-6-821398
Office Hours Sat-Th. 8 AM-2 PM

Potential Sponsors "Qualification Statements" must be submitted on or before 14 hours Amman time on September 16, 1997, to MEMR at the above address (#2).

Israel's economic growth slows

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's economy continued to sputter in the second quarter with growth in gross domestic product (GDP) slowing to an annual rate of only 1.6 per cent, the Central Bureau of Statistics said Sunday.

GDP increased by an annual rate of 2.0 per cent in the first quarter of 1997 and by 3.5 per cent in the year earlier quarter.

First half growth was only 1.8 per cent against 4.0 per cent in the year earlier period.

The treasury has forecast GDP will grow 2.5 per cent in 1997.

Last week, the government approved a sweeping package of structural reforms aimed at restarting the economy in 1998.

Faced with rising unemployment and fearing a further loss of jobs, trade unions have threatened labour action to protest plans for privatisation and an end to several government monopolies.

On a per capita basis, GDP declined by 0.5 per cent in the second quarter after increasing by only 0.2 per cent in the first quarter. In the first half GDP per capita fell by 0.4 per cent.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	WGB	HKD
US Dollar	1.185	0.6217	1.5070	117.35	1.3905	1775.94	2.0471	6.1300	
DE Mark	0.5499		0.3415	0.8287	64.52	0.7644	976.33	3.3707	
GB Sterling	1.8085	2.9285		2.4222	189.76	2.2365	2856.50	3.2928	9.8601
CH Franc	0.6636	1.2059	0.4120		77.84	0.9221	1177.68	136.27	4.0650
JP Yen	0.0085	1.5490	0.5292	1.2836		1.1844	15.13	174.37	5.2215
CA Dollar	0.7192	1.3870	0.4467	1.0832	1.18		1276.74	1.4715	4.4069
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0235	0.3497	0.8498	1815.91	0.7826		11.52	3.4502
NL Guilder	0.4885	88.77	0.3033	73.60	67.27	0.6788	866.90		2.9923
FR Franc	0.1631	0.2966	0.1013	24.5760	19.12	0.2268	33.38	33.3800	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BHD	QAT	KUW	AEU	YEM	EGP
US Dollar	0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6398	0.3045	3.6728	1539.00	3.3825	
Jordan Dinar	1.4124		5.2972	0.5325	5.1410	0.4301	5.1876	2173.73	4.7775
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1888		0.1005	0.97	0.0812	0.98	410.38	0.9019
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8780	9.5460		9.65	0.8077	9.74	4082.23	8.5721
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1946	1.0304	1.0304		0.0637	1.01	422.83	0.9293
Kuwait Dinar	3.2841	2.3251	12.3166	1.2381	11.95		12.06	5054.19	0.9293
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0208	0.9910	0.0823		419.03	0.9210
Lebanese/1000	0.85	0.4600	2.4369	0.2450	2.3850	0.1979	2.3885		2.1979
Egyptian	0.2956	0.2093	1.1088	0.1115	1.0761	0.0900	1.0858	454.99	

Energy									
Oil	Crack	Yen	Barrel	Crack	Yen	Barrel	Crack	Yen	Barrel
Brent	18.11	19.38							
W. Texa	20.05	19.99							
Bonny	18.11	19.38							
Dubai	17.70	17.85							
UL Gas	0.00	216.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	WGB	HKD
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4850	0.16577	0.40209	31.3038				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.49527	0.16927	0.41059	31.9652				
KW Dinar	3.2841	5.97372	2.04165	4.95295	385.505				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.82393	1.64908	4	311.429				
CY Pound	1.8634	3.3886	1.1578	2.8081	218.67				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Gold (oz's)	326.5	327.25							
Silver (oz's)	4.57	4.58							
Platinum (oz's)	427	430							
Al (3 Months)	1690	1695							
CU (3 Months)	2194	2199							
Zinc (3 Months)	1528	1525							
Lead (3 Months)	511	515							
Ni (3 Months)	6660	6690							

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Currency	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months	Currency	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
USD	5.59	5.71	5.81	5.71	5.81	USD	5.59	5.71	5.81
GBP	6.93	7.00	7.21	7.18	7.40	GBP	6.93	7.00	7.21
JPY	0.40	0.50	0.58	0.62	0.50	JPY	0.40	0.50	0.58
DEM	3.08	3.43	3.19	3.37	3.38	DEM	3.08	3.43	3.19
FRF	3.18	3.31	3.44	3.54	3.60	FRF	3.18	3.31	3.44
CHF	1.26	1.38	1.50	1.43	1.65	CHF	1.26	1.38	1.50
ITL	6.50	6.78	6.73	6.63	6.55	ITL	6.50	6.78	6.73

Main Equity Indices									
Index	Value	Change	% Change	High	Low	Index	Value	Change	% Change
New York DOW JONES	7894.58	-247.37	-3.11	7937.38	7894.58	Frankfurt DAX	4152.86	-78.57	-1.86
New York S&P 500	900.81	-23.96	-2.69	924.77	900.81				
London FTSE 100	4685.8	-725.5	-2.51	4990.8	4685.8				
Tokyo Nikkei 225	19326.03	103.41	0.54	19466.4	19312.7				
Paris CAC 40	2921.84	-2.2	-0.08	2933.05	2924.04				

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS	1 Kitchenware	5 Impertinent one	9 Serf	14 Bailiwick	15 Jacob's twin	16 Similar	17 Shake sites	20 Sri	21 Neckwear	22 Scene	25 Redactors: abbr.	26 Emoter	29 Bill	31 Peace	36 — corner	38 Diamond stats.	40 Occupied	41 Vineyard?	44 Jack	45 — heat (tie)	46 Place	47 Side dishes	49 Shot	51 Lady of Spain: abbr.	52 Slippery sort	54 Game for three	56 Crude sources?	61 Meal on a stick	65 Engine	68 Toss	69 Maneuverable, as a	70 Garden spot	71 Invited	72 Haul	73 Tom	24 Subsidized	26 Sells on the street	27 Iowa society	28 Heavy — (loud music)	30 Covered, in a way	32 Literary collections	33 Renaissance instruments	34 Felix's foil	35 Conductor	37 Russian river	39 Rises high	43 Part of the US	48 Peddle	50 Large shark	53 Bridges	55 Spud	56 Govt. watchdog: abbr.	57 Followers: suff.	58 Security problem	59 Tsunami	60 War memento	62 Tarry	63 Microwave	64 Flair	66 A feast — famine	67 Acting Ryan
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by Frederick T. Buhler

DOWN	1 Bucket	2 Aquatic predator	3 Youth	4 Pillages	5 Date	6 Spy gp.	7 Foot	8 Insect stages	9 Difficulty	10 African Raines	11 Eminent one	12 Soup vegetable	13 Hardy lass	18 Incursion	19 Conjunctions	23 Period	24 Subsidized	26 Sells on the street	27 Iowa society	28 Heavy — (loud music)	30 Covered, in a way	32 Literary collections	33 Renaissance instruments	34 Felix's foil	35 Conductor	37 Russian river	39 Rises high	43 Part of the US	48 Peddle	50 Large shark	53 Bridges	55 Spud	56 Govt. watchdog: abbr.	57 Followers: suff.	58 Security problem	59 Tsunami	60 War memento	62 Tarry	63 Microwave	64 Flair	66 A feast — famine	67 Acting Ryan
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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierro, Astrologer, Carroll, Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Analyse your ambitions carefully today and make plans for the days ahead. Try to listen more to the ideas of your mate whom you can trust and less to those of fellow associate who are only out for themselves.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A new contact can bring you fine ideas today for greater prosperity in the days ahead. You should not be extravagant later this evening where pleasure is concerned, since you want to still have funds available.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Try to look at an old difficulty from a new angle today and thereby you can come up with a valid solution. Tonight is not a good evening to entertain, so spend this time with your loved ones and relax.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Be careful of your health today, thereby you can be prepared to handle any difficulties. Clear up a difficulty with a fellow associate so that you can be successful in your career activities. Do not neglect the condition of your home.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Emphasise home improvement this morning and make it more attractive. Talk over plans for the days ahead with your loved ones later this evening and devise a plan of action which will make your lives more harmonious.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Contact one today who has creative ideas and discuss what must be done to make your efforts more productive. Make plans early in the day for socialising with friends later this evening and go to fun locations.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study an alternative route to success today and discuss it with one who can assist you in making it a reality. You should not let worry later this evening get the better of you or you could defeat the purpose of helpful advice.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get an early start today on completion of your career activities which have been given by a bigwig. Trust your own judgement and try to avoid one who wants to slow you down in achieving your measure of success.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Keep away from the public today, and also avoid an irate higher-up who is out to sabotage your efforts for success. Find a way to delight your mate later this evening by presenting a gift or flowers, which make him or her feel wonderful.

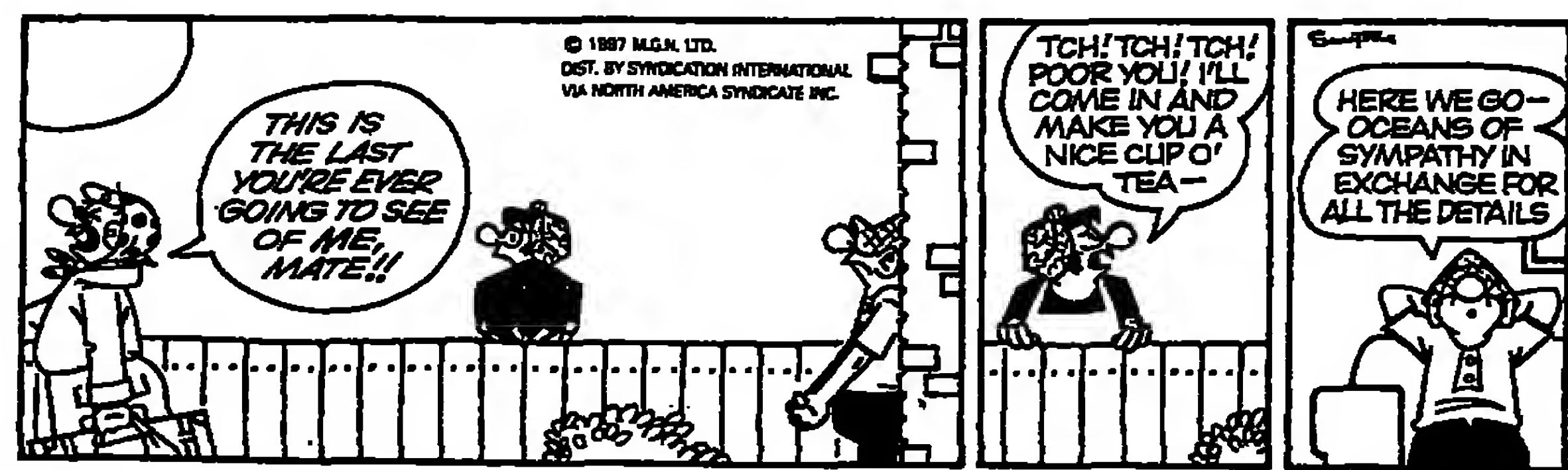
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A clever friend can assist you in fulfilling an important wish, so let this person provide you with help. Act confidently today, and show off your own wisdom, thereby you can gain recognition from those in authority.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A quiet and subtle gain will be made at your career activities, so be prepared. You should not disagree with fellow associates or they could turn on you. Take a new opportunity in the afternoon which can make you quite prosperous.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Look to a long-time acquaintance of different background today for gaining an aim later this evening. Avoid depression by thinking of some pleasant times which you have spent with your friends and loved ones.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Bani Hani expects Jordanian companies to win bigger share of exports to Iraq in second stage

A SENIOR Jordanian official expects the U.N. Sanctions Committee to process the contracts of Jordanian companies, for the second stage of oil-for-food agreement with Iraq, at a pace that would be speedier and easier than the procedures which were taken during the first stage. Mohammad Bani Hani, assistant secretary general at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply, said in a state-

ment that the ministry will stay in constant contact with Jordan's permanent representative at the United Nations to facilitate and expedite obtaining the approvals in a shorter period of time. He added that the commercial attaché at the Iraqi embassy in Amman is presently conducting wide-ranging contacts with Jordanian companies that intend to seal contracts with Iraq. Such contacts aim at handing interested parties invitations to participate in tenders to supply food, medicines, detergents and soap to

Iraq under the agreement with the U.N. Dr. Bani Hani announced that the total value of contracts that the Sanctions Committee approved and were executed by Jordanian companies was \$100 million out of \$120 million of contracts won by Jordanian companies during the implementation of the first stage. "No decision has been taken yet regarding three contracts for Jordanian companies for supplying oils, detergents and soap," the assistant secretary general said.

He expected Jordanian companies to win a larger share of contracts during the second stage. "We hope this share will reach \$200 million," Dr. Bani Hani said. In this

regard, we rely on the competitive strength of Jordanian companies in terms of quality and prices."

Industry, Trade and Supply Minister Hani Mulki met representatives of Jordanian companies that export to Iraq and urged them to participate by competitive offers of high quality and low prices. The minister told the representatives that the government has appointed full-time personnel at the Jordanian office at the United Nations to follow up the requests and process the work for the Jordanian companies (Al Dustour).

Drug stores, pharmaceutical firms want Ministry of Health to pay large debts

THE MINISTRY of Health plans to borrow from the health insurance fund to repay debts amounting to JD18.5 million to pharmaceutical companies and drug stores. Ismail Saadi, the director of supplies at the ministry told

Al Ra'i. He confirmed that the ministry owes JD2.3 million to the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company, JD5 million to various drug stores, JD7 million to the Jordan University Hospital and JD4 million to the Royal Medical Services.

The president of Jordan Pharmacists Association hinted that medicine and drug supplies to the ministry would be stopped due to the high indebtedness of the ministry. Mr. Saadi told the association president that the prime minister has promised to resolve this problem within one month.

According to an informed source, the ministry is suffering from a difficult financial situation which, if continues, will lead to a shortage of medicines and medical supplies. The source attributed the shortage of drugs to measures taken by the Ministry of Finance for accounting purposes that has nothing to do with the actual needs of the ministry. He explained that the ministry submits lists of needs based on scientific and accurate statistics but the Ministry of Finance reduces these amounts and, as such, the Ministry of Health is put in a difficult position.

The budget allocates JD20 million for drug purchases and JD4.6 million for medical supplies (Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
BOOZING BANK CENTER AMMAN - STREET 101											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 17/08/1997											
PART	12 MONTHS HIGH	12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DEV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
298,000	219,000		ARAB BANK	13.3	1.38	5	100	29020	290.50	289.00	1.50-
2,340	1,680		JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	32	13010	26197	2.04	2.03	-
5,800	4,100		CO-OP BANK	11.1	2.80	1	100	535	5.45	5.35	-0.10-
1,210	1,380		MID-EAST INV. BK.	59.8	0.00	3	1000	923	90	91	+0.01+
2,480	2,150		INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.6	7.26	3	10050	23467	2.33	2.33	-
5,100	4,500		THE HOUSING BK.	14.3	4.04	1	250	1200	4.80	4.80	-
4,180	2,440		JOR. NATL. BANK	10.9	0.00	1	100	306	3.05	3.06	-0.01-
2,870	2,450		ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	17.3	0.00	1	100	360	3.60	3.60	-
4,950	3,480		JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.5	3.15	18	4779	18234	3.82	3.81	-0.01-
1,750	1,310		UNION BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	2	92	117	1.29	1.27	-0.02-
3,800	3,000		JOR. DEV. FUND. BANK	20.9	0.00	2	705	2294	3.29	3.25	-0.04-
2,440	1,000		UNION BANK (JORDAN)	7	14.28	3	950	999	1.08	1.05	-0.03-
1,440	850		PRINCE ALWALID DEV. BK.	9	0.00	1	100	100	1.95	1.00	-0.95-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 213.58	CHNG: -0.48		74	31337	103749			
2,230	1,890		JOR. FRENCH BANK	4.7	12.05	3	450	747	1.64	1.66	+0.02+
2,200	1,820		ARAB LIFE INSUR.	8.2	4.76	5	8050	16905	2.10	2.10	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 114.01	CHNG: +0.11		8	8500	17652			
1,820	1,500		JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.1	5.99	13	17193	28712	1.67	1.67	-
1,620	1,320		KERB ELECTRICITY	10.1	6.76	9	6000	10200	1.62	1.70	+0.08+
7,500	6,000		VEHICLE OWNERS FED.	4.72	5.30	3	2874	18968	6.60	6.60	-
3,050	2,150		SHIPPING LINES	16.6	4.56	3	20000	5700	2.87	2.85	-0.02-
1,010	820		REAL ESTATE INV.	13.3	6.25	3	25000	24000	0.91	0.96	+0.05+
8,430	6,800		ALBANK	12.2	7.35	1	300	3400	6.80	6.80	-
1,870	1,150		MID-EAST HOTELS	19.2	0.00	7	3850	4851	1.24	1.26	-
3,720	2,890		ARAB TEL. INV. CO.	8.0	0.00	6	5600	17136	3.06	3.06	-
2,230	1,610		UNION CO.	8.4	6.21	3	3000	5310	1.79	1.77	-0.02-
1,010	640		UNION BANK DEV.	9	0.00	3	274	196	1.68	1.68	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 110.03	CHNG: 0.00		51	84291	169763			
4,450	3,220		JOR. CO-OP BANK	26.7	3.77	25	17384	69225	4.00	3.97	-0.03-
7,050	5,100		ARAB PETROL. CO.	14.2	3.28	2	2750	16776	6.10	6.10	-
10,250	9,040		JOR. PETROL. INVEST. COMPANY	9.8	8.82	25	1613	16252	10.07	10.05	-0.02-
4,160	3,040		ARAB PETROL. BANK	11.4	4.83	53	16985	70486	4.10	4.14	+0.04+
1,800	1,290		JOR. PETROL. BANK	16.2	6.11	1	100	131	1.31	1.31	-
10,250	5,000		ARAB CHEM. DIST.	27.9	5.13	3	183	1071	5.57	5.85	+0.28+
1,530	1,050		ARABIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	2	300	343	1.14	1.15	+0.01+
5,550	4,200		ARAB ALUM. IND. CO.	13.3	4.60	13	4274	22811	5.40	5.44	+0.04+
3,850	2,400		ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.6	10.42	3	5300	12799	2.42	2.40	-0.02-
980	450		LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.9	0.00	26	26150	12429	4.47	4.47	-
1,300	1,000		ARAB PAPER CO.	31.8	0.00	1	700	728	1.06	1.04	-0.02-
1,710	1,100		UNION BANK	5.0	0.00	20	17800	6708	0.51	0.52	+0.01+
1,210	810		INTERMED. PETRO. CORP.	9	0.00	4	5500	3025	0.56	0.55	-0.01-
980	630		JOR. CO-OP BANK	9	0.00	12	18100	12007	0.67	0.66	-0.01-
920	610		JOR. PETROL. BANK	9	0.00	30	34500	21946	1.52	1.54	+0.02+
1,670	1,120		ARAB PETROL. BANK	16.9	5.30	9	2150	2849	1.34	1.32	-0.02-
1,430	720		KANFAR INVEST.	71.9	0.00	4	1480	1061	1.74	1.73	-0.01-
1,070	780		ARAB PETROL. BANK	9	0.00	7086	1431	0.87	0.86	-0.01-	
1,510	990		JOR. IND. RESOURCES	13.3	10.10	21	6583	6533	1.04	0.99	-0.05-
1,620	1,300		NATL. CHEMICAL	14.8	4.46	1	200	314	1.58	1.57	-0.01-
1,070	780		JOR. PETROL. BANK	9	0.00	12	14500	12480	0.87	0.86	-0.01-
2,090	1,340		EL-SAYED READY WEAR	15.8	0.00	14	2897	4355	1.55	1.50	-0.05-
1,230	1,080		UNION BANK	6.2	0.00	7	3130	3596	1.16	1.14	-0.02-
1,200	860		UNION CH. & VEG.	43.6	0.00	4	5230	5038	0.96	0.96	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 122.01	CHNG: -0.21		310	188334	310481			
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 164.01	CHNG: -0.34		443	312462	601646			
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 17/08/1997											
PART	12 MONTHS HIGH	12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DEV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
630	340		CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	1050	357	34	34	-
650	410		JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.7	0.00	10	8500	3400	42	40	-0.02-
1,550	1,070		SABA PET. INVEST.	74.1	0.00	2	1000	1110	1.18	1.13	-0.05-
950	640		JOR. PET. INV. CO.	9	0.00	4	1662	914	58	55	-0.03-
840	560		UNION INV. CO.	9	0.00	5	10070	2013	70	70	-
670	460		ARAB PET. INVEST.	9	0.00	26	15150	13840	43	39	-0.04-
950	720		AL-SHARH INV. CO.	9	0.00	4	14334	12321	86	85	-0.01-
950	610		AL-DALAYLA 75%	67.2	0.00	24	105450	46815	69	70	+0.01+
750	510		ARAB PET. INV. CO.	9	0.00	4	1700	901	87	83	-0.04-
570	380		ARAB PET. INV. CO.	47.2	0.00	3	1000	402	41	41	-
750	400		NATL. PET. IND. MANCO	9	0.00	34	17150	33649	47	46	-0.01-
620	420		JORDAN STEEL	36.2	0.00	6	15900	12763	1.78	1.80	+0.02+
580	430		ARAB PET. INV. CO.	9	0.00	1	7650	3825	50	50	-
730	380		MID-EAST PETROL. 75%	9	0.00	6	8250	3063	62	62	-0.01-
1,190	860		UNION PETROL. 75%	9	0.00	7	2550	2340	60	60	-
670	460		NATL. PET. IND. MANCO	9	0.00	3	2250	1013	60	60	-
570	320		IND. ENG.	9	0.00	5	2650	875	23	23	-
820	520		IND. PETROL. 75%	19.1	0.00	1	81	58	73	73	-
520	320		IND. PETROL. 75%	9	0.00	1	150	36	25	24	-0.01-
820	520		IND. PETROL. 75%	9	0.00	1	250	163	64	65	+0.01+
1,000	730		NATL. PET. IND. MANCO	9	0.00	1	512	251	64	64	-
650	430		MID-EAST PETROL. 75%	7.9	15.63	2	2000	1280	64	64	-
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 164.01	CHNG: -0.34		364	296009	141387			

U.S. companies plan to invest in Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — A few pioneering U.S. businessmen are already opening their briefcases in Beirut, just two weeks after a 10-year U.S. travel ban on Lebanon was lifted, to profit from Lebanon's multi-billion dollar reconstruction drive.

"We are looking to invest in several projects worth a total of about \$200 million," Isam Beydoun, chairman of engineering and construction firm

the Ace Group, told Reuters. "We will invest in projects such as hospitals, housing, vocational centers and construction and we will soon open offices in Beirut," added Mr. Beydoun, a spokesman for five U.S. firms currently visiting Beirut.

He and officials from U.S. companies Dewberry Davis, Clark Construction, American Medical Consultant and other firms comprise the first American business delegation to visit Lebanon since the ban was lifted on July 30. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said in lifting the restriction that Washington would continue to advise its citizens against any travel to Lebanon.

Lebanon, seeking to improve its image tarnished by years of civil war, suicide bombings and kidnappings of Western hostages, had for years been urging Washington to end the ban and is trying to lure foreign investment.

The U.S. delegation has held meetings with billion-dollar Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri and other senior officials as well as business leaders to explore investment opportunities in the country still recovering from the 1975-1990 civil war.

Mr. Hariri is leading a multi-billion dollar drive to rebuild war-ravaged Beirut and repair the badly damaged infrastructure, a project that has lured scores of European companies which have cashed in on the rebuilding.

"We have lost out on billions but it's not too late. It's time for American companies to participate in the reconstruction," said Mr. Beydoun, a Lebanese who emigrated to the United States in 1975.

"We will encourage other American companies to open offices in Lebanon," he added. Mr. Beydoun said no deals had been signed on his visit to Lebanon but he and other businessmen in the delegation said they would try to secure deals in the short term.

"By the end of the year we hope to start on four projects," he said. "We will look for financing from private investors, banks or the U.S. government."

Larry Keller of engineering and architecture firm Dewberry Davis, said U.S. companies should take a long-term view of business opportunities here and cautioned that any renewed violence could impact the investment climate.

"If the political situation unwinds and any disturbances get out of hand and affect stability this would be a factor," he said. He and others in the delegation said they felt safer in Lebanon than in major American cities and that they had not taken any special security measures on their Beirut trip.

INVEST IN JORDAN
Jordan Investment Corporation is inviting local and foreign investors to buy its whole share amounting to 70 per cent of the capital of Airport Hotels Company/Alia Gateway Hotel. Interested investors are kindly requested to receive the terms of reference from Project Department Manager during the period (18-25) /8/1997 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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Seles to meet Huber in Toronto final

TORONTO (AP) — Her game may have arrived fashionably late, but when Monica Seles decided to dispatch Conchita Martinez in Saturday's Du Maurier Open semifinal, she did it with style.

Seles, the top seed, dropped the opening game to the upstart Spaniard and had the late-arriving crowd in doubt. But Seles broke Martinez the next game, climbing back from a 15-40 deficit, and assumed a 5-1 lead en route to a 6-2, 7-6 (8-6) victory.

Seles will meet Germany's Anke Huber in the final. Huber advanced when Mary Joe Fernandez withdrew after the second set.

"I played well but I also had spurts of terrible play when she started playing well," Seles said. "When I needed I made some great shots."

On the road to her third Du Maurier final — aiming to be the first to win three consecutive titles — Seles has shown a penchant for

going into corners and keeping her foes continuously on the run.

Martinez beat Seles three weeks ago for the first time in 12 tries, and said Friday that the key was to remain aggressive.

"I started out real good (last time), but it took me longer to get into the match," Martinez said. "I came close in the second set, and in the third, you never know."

In the other semifinal, Huber qualified for her first Du Maurier final when Fernandez withdrew after losing the second set 2-6.

Fernandez took the opening set 6-3 but dropped the next one to Huber, who also came back in Friday's quarterfinal against South Africa's Amanda Coetzer, the third seed, to win the last two sets.

After a visit from her trainer, Fernandez had one eye on her right wrist and the other on the U.S. Open, only a week away, and called it quits, which means she also forfeited her dou-

bles quarterfinal with partner Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, the top-seeded open duet.

Fernandez cited a recurring tendinitis problem that grew worse as the week grew older at York University's national tennis centre.

"I didn't think her injury was going to be that bad," Huber said. "She was hitting quite well, it's a pity."

"I started a bit slow but my serve was already a little bit better by the end of the first set. It was hard for me to get into the match but I played better once I found my rhythm."

Huber, who partners with Seles when they play doubles, has never beaten her in seven tries.

"I think there's not too much tactic," she said. "Just run as much as you can and try to make her move."

Said Seles: "It's going to be a lot of running and hard hitting. And winning streaks were meant to be broken, so mine doesn't mean much to me."

Iraqi team heads for friendly in Lebanon

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The Iraqi national team has left for a friendly international in Lebanon, their first meeting since 1988, the football federation said Sunday.

The match has been arranged as part of efforts to soothe anger over Iraq's exclusion from the Arab Games staged last month in Beirut. An Iraqi volleyball team has since also travelled to Beirut for a tournament.

Lebanon gave way to pressure from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to keep our athletes from Iraq, which has been largely ostracised since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The Iraqi football squad left Saturday, to travel via Amman, for the match which is to be contested in Beirut Thursday, an official at the Iraqi federation said.

Lebanon, which last played Iraq nine years ago in Jordan, has been invited along with Syria and Jordan to play in a four-nation tournament to be staged in Baghdad in October.

Iraq has denied British newspaper reports that its national squad were tortured for their elimination from the World Cup last month.

S. Africa reach World Cup finals

JOHANNESBURG (AFP)

— South Africa became the fourth African nation to qualify for the 1998 World Cup finals when they defeated Congo 1-0 at FNB stadium on Saturday.

Nigeria, Tunisia and Morocco secured places at the 32-nation football showcase two months ago and Cameroon or Angola will fill the final slot allocated to the continent today.

The golden goal came after only 14 minutes when Philemon Masinga raced on to a loose ball and slammed the ball high over goalkeeper Brice Sanba from outside the penalty area.

Success came before a capacity 100,000 crowd on a cloudless day and was a personal triumph for coach Clive Barker, who celebrated his 22nd victory since taking charge three years ago.

Barker inherited a team that had won only five times in 15 matches after returning to international football

1998 World Cup qualifiers

- Teams that have qualified for the 32-team 1998 World Cup in France, June 10-July 10:
- Host (1)
 - France
 - Defending champion (1)
 - Brazil
 - Africa (5)
 - Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tunisia
 - Asia (3 or 4)
 - none
 - CONCACAF (3)
 - none
 - Europe (14)
 - none
 - Oceania (0 or 1)
 - none
 - South America (4)
 - none

In 1992 following three decades of apartheid-induced isolation.

Few took the coach seriously when he vowed that his country would win the African Nations Cup and qualify for the World Cup and now both goals have been achieved.

Barker said after the match that he would quit unless his position is

upgraded to a full-time post and it seems only a matter of time before his wish is granted.

South Africa performed well in defence and midfield for long periods only to be let down by poor passing in a more open and exciting match than most observers predicted.

Congo, outsiders when the mini-league began,

fought gallantly throughout and Macchembe Younga-Mouhani and Charles Imboula squandered second-half chances.

Substitute Mark Williams, two-goal hero of the African Nations Cup success, was unlucky in the dying minutes when his drive rebounded off the crossbar with Samba helpless.

Bjorkman, Moya reach Indianapolis finale

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana (AFP) — Carlos Moya pounced on a worn-out Wayne Ferreira and Jonas Bjorkman took equal advantage of Mark Woodforde's fatigue as both won places in the final of the \$1 million RCA championships here Saturday.

Moya, the Spanish fifth seed and Australian Open finalist, defeated 1994 holder Ferreira from South Africa 6-4, 6-2 in just 62 minutes. Sweden's ninth seed Bjorkman earned an equally one-way victory against Woodforde 6-0, 6-2 in less than an hour.

Both of the losers were partial victims of scheduling brought on by television pressure. The first semifinal between Bjorkman and Australian Woodforde began at the unprecedented hour of 10 a.m.

"I didn't have enough energy to compete," said Ferreira, who at one point lost eight of ten games.

"I was more tired mentally than physically. But having to be here so early to play isn't fair. Both Mark and myself struggled because of the schedule. It was not really fair."

Ferreira fell into bed early Saturday morning after winning a third-set tiebreak Friday night to oust Swede Magnus Larsson in the quarter-final.

Woodforde, while playing a day match and winning against Andre Agassi, had to compete in night doubles. Unseeded Woodforde had been aiming to upset a

fourth seeded opponent in a row after eliminating No. 12 American Chris Woodruff, Chile's Marcelo Rios, the No. 6 and crowd-pleaser Andre Agassi, seeded 14th.

"It was a struggle to even finish some of my service games," said the 31-year-old from Adelaide. "I lost a lot of motion just from being tired in my shoulders and my legs. It was tough last night playing the doubles (which he and Todd Woodbridge won)."

Moya won the first set after going down a break and getting it back. He then dominated in the second as Ferreira's resistance faded.

"I knew that he was tired from last night," said the Spaniard, his hair cut short — but growing back — after serving an obligatory five days in Spain's military reserves last month.

"I didn't care that he broke me, I knew that I could try to get it back. The second set was easier. I was playing my best tennis with confidence."

Ninth seed Jonas Bjorkman pounced upon Woodforde to earn his second final in the United States this year. The victory puts the 25-year-old Bjorkman into the top 20 for the first time in his career. "That's great for me," said the Swede. "It's been one of my goals for the past few weeks, so I'm pleased."

Sprinter Montgomery upstages world champion

MONACO (AFP) — Tim Montgomery, who took bronze in the recent World Championships, won the 100m at the IAAF Grand Prix meeting here on Saturday in a field including world champion and American compatriot Maurice Greene.

Montgomery, also third in Zurich three days ago, was a clear winner in 9.99sec in a field which included Leroy Burrell of the USA, who has run the second fastest time in history. However, Burrell could only finish a disappointing seventh.

And Namibia's Frankie Fredericks beat world champion Ato Boldon of Trinidad and Tobago into second place over 200m in a time of 19.93.

World 800m champion and world record holder Wilson Kipketer hardly broke sweat in winning his race.

Kenya-born Kipketer, who smashed the world record in Zurich just three days ago with 1:41.24, ran a still impressive 1:42.77 with Kenyans Patrick Konchellah and Herzekele Sepened second and third.

Kipketer who equalled the 16-year-old mark of 1:41.73 of Britain's Sebastian Coe in Stockholm on July 7 this year before breaking it in Zurich, is clearly in a class of his own.

However, he almost apologised for not going faster. "Monaco was a little close to Zurich," Kipketer said. "I tried to relax but I can't push myself each time."

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Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States is tended to by a trainer after injuring her wrist during her semi-final match against Anke Huber of Germany at the Canadian Open. Fernandez withdrew from the match due to her injury (Reuters photo)

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GOREN BRIDG

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STANLEY...
WOLFE...

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Table	Q. 1 - No South you	Q. 2 - No South you	Q. 3 - No South you	Q. 4 - No South you
Table 1	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 2	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 3	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 4	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 5	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 6	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 7	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 8	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 9	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74
Table 10	19851 932 4032	4832 74	19851 932 4032	4832 74

Q. 1 - No South you
Q. 2 - No South you
Q. 3 - No South you
Q. 4 - No South you

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Russian diver Dimitri Sautin performs during the mens 3-metre springboard event European Swimming Championships in Seville August 16. Sautin scored 660.69 points winning the gold medal (Reuters photo)

Scottish fans vent fury as Celtic hit rock bottom

GLASGOW (AFP) — Celtic were booed off the pitch on Saturday after crashing to a humiliating 2-1 home defeat to Dunfermline.

The Scottish giants are rock bottom of the table after failing to take a point from their first two games of the new season which began with high hopes amongst the fans following the arrival of coach Wim Jansen in the summer.

Dutchman Jansen did not attempt to hide his frustrations.

"You can imagine my disappointment tonight. We have now lost the first two games and given Rangers a six-point start," he said. "I think we were the better side before half-time and could have gone in maybe two or three goals up and gone on from there."

"But we came out of the dressing room and at once went down 1-1 and from that moment we lost our

shape."

Dunfermline's Hamish French recovered from the disappointment of giving away a penalty to score one himself as Celtic's challenge faded in the second half.

Jansen endured a miserable first premier league home game as he saw his side's initial dominance of an apparently routine fixture disappear after the interval.

Dunfermline trailed to Andreas Thoni's 40th-minute spot kick at half-time, after French had been exposed for pace by Henrik Larsson and pulled the Swede down.

But after 46 minutes Tosh McKinlay's failure to clear the ball allowed David Bingham time and space to put the pars level straight after the restart.

Then, in the 77th minute, a further defensive lapse saw Malky MacKay pull down Allan Moore, allow-

ing French to make amends for his earlier error with a well-struck penalty of his own.

Following this loss and the opening 2-1 defeat at Hibernian, Jansen's league record now reads played two, lost two — and the Parkhead faithful, fearing a record 10th successive title for rivals Rangers, left Jansen in no doubt about their feelings at the final whistle.

Elsewhere, three goals in a six minute spell just before half-time gave hearts a thumping 4-1 victory over hapless Aberdeen in a dramatic match at Tynecastle.

John Robertson with a penalty, Steve Fulton, and Colin Cameron cancelled out an earlier strike from Aberdeen's Mike Newell in a remarkable turnaround of fortunes after Aberdeen had dominated the opening quarter of an hour.

Substitute Thomas Flogel killed off any thoughts of a comeback when he side-footed home from Stephane Adams cross with a minute remaining.

St Johnstone boss Paul Sturrock warned his high-flying players that they cannot afford to get Vertigo after a 1-0 at Motherwell which sent the newly-promoted side to the top of the fledgling Premier Division table.

Roddy Grant's 65-minute winner gave the Saints a victory they deserved but Sturrock is demanding a tougher mental approach.

"I've explained to the players that they must concentrate more and work harder at it," said Sturrock. "We looked apprehensive in the first 15 and last 10 minutes and the players were told that they'll be punished at this level if they continue to do that."

JOC commends Kingdom's results at 8th Pan-Arab Games

Government to discuss potential sports fund

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) hopes that plans to raise a sports fund will finally go ahead, after years of delay, when the Council of Ministers meets Tuesday.

JOC Vice-Chairman Mouaffaq Fawwaz said Minister of Culture and Youth Qasem Abu Ein had promised the JOC board in its recent meeting that he would pursue efforts to issue a temporary law that would create the long-awaited fund.

"Although this issue was discussed in Parliament in past years, the time has come to finally go ahead with it. In the latest Pan-Arab Games in Beirut, our national teams showed that they deserve our support," Dr. Fawwaz said.

Jordan gained more gold medals in Beirut than in the past 7 Pan-Arab Games altogether, capping the best Jordanian participation to date since the event was first held in 1953.

Jordan took a total of 40 medals, including 10 gold, 8 silver and 22 bronze, in the two-week-long event.

The JOC meeting commended Jordan's performance at the Pan-Arab Games, which was sealed with the soccer team's gold medal win.

"Everybody is interested and supportive of our teams after the latest results. Because of the euphoria we're living, now is the best time to go ahead with funding plans," Dr.

Fawwaz added.

He said that investing the sports fund would be an excellent way of securing continuous funding.

Cash-strapped federations have not yet paid their dues to the JOC to cover part of the expenses for their participation in the Pan-Arab Games. Dr. Fawwaz said after federations pay the 40 per cent of the expenses they had committed themselves to paying, the JOC still needs JD50,000 to cover the over JD100,000 incurred cost.

While the JOC and sports officials are evaluating the latest results, Dr. Fawwaz said it is important to start work on hosting the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001 for which the Kingdom received approval. Kuwait was chosen as a substitute in case Jordan withdrew its bid.

"Work and plans to prepare the necessary infrastructure for hosting the Pan-Arab Games should start immediately."

"While we may have the manpower and organisational skills, we need infrastructure, stadiums, sports facilities and hotels. It is a big event," Dr. Fawwaz added.

He explained that Jordanian officials should now decide whether they will host the Games in 2001 since the Arab Sports Federation would rather have Jordan host the event in 1999, two years earlier than scheduled, to help teams prepare for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Jordan has taken part in all seven past Pan-Arab Games. In Beirut, the Kingdom finished fifth among

the 19 participating countries compared to 9th overall in the 1992 Pan-Arab Games in Syria where the team earned only 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Dr. Fawwaz said excellent athletes and medal winners would be honoured at a ceremony on Aug. 22.

The ministry of culture and youth and the JOC have allocated JD 14,300 as awards which will be distributed as follows:

- JD4,500 for gold medalists (JD500 each)
- JD2,400 for silver medalists (JD300 each)
- JD1,400 for bronze medalists (JD200 each)
- JD 3000 for the soccer team.

The Kingdom's taekwondo team had one of the most impressive performances earning a total of 13 medals.

Zaha Talhouini, Alisar Matar, Hussein Taleh and Rued Naji took gold as Ali Asmar, Mohammad Abul Ruz and Nancy Hindi took silver, and Fatima Sayyad, Ahlam Bino, Shadi Abu Taleb, Daoud Matar, Ibrahim Agel and Mohammad Nawaf took bronze.

The boxing and athletics teams together secured 10 medals.

The boxers won two gold medals through Mohammad Abu Khadijeh and Ayman Al Nadi and three bronze through Kamal Abdul Majid, Khalidoun Abdul Hameed and Basel Hindawi.

In athletics, Nada Kassar won a gold in the discus and a silver medal in the shot put; Fakhreddin Fuad added another gold in the

high jump; Ala' Abdul Hadi won a bronze in the triple jump and Amal Mutari took another bronze in the women's marathon.

In weightlifting, Ayed Khawaldeh became the first Jordanian to win three bronze medals; Amer Natour took silver and bronze medals in fencing and Mousa Khalaf took a silver for Jordan in judo.

In Greco-Roman wrestling, Abdul Hakim Abu Snehneh took gold and Ismail Issa Al Sheikh added a silver in freestyle wrestling.

In karate, Na'el Oweimer took a silver medal, while teammate Amid Masoud took the bronze.

The women's karate trio of Nawal Bayyari, Azahir Zuhdi and Butheina Mahsiri won three bronze medals.

In table tennis, Iyad Maknay and Abdul Aziz Rida took the bronze in doubles and added another bronze in the team event.

In women's basketball, Jordan finished fourth, while the men came in 6th.

The results of the shooting, equestrian and swimming teams were far from competitive records.

Hana Majaj took the only swimming bronze medal making up for otherwise disappointing results by her teammates.

The equestrian team failed in the Grand Prix event with veteran Hani Bisharat eliminated. Ra'ed Naser coming in 9th and Sinan Nashashibi finishing 19th.

In the equestrian team event, Jordan finished at a disappointing 7th place among 8 competing teams.

Kafelnikov, Rafter to face off in New Haven final

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut (AFP) — Top seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov edged past Petr Korda to reach the final of the Pilot Pen International on Saturday, beating the fifth seeded Czech 6-4, 7-6(7-4).

In the final he will face eighth seeded Australian Patrick Rafter, who ousted British No. 11 seed Greg Rusedski 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

Both Kafelnikov and Korda looked drained by the hot and humid conditions and played slow-motion tennis for most of their 97-minute battle. Neither showed any great appetite for the competition, with little running and few lengthy rallies.

"The heat was a big factor," said Kafelnikov, who has twice failed to advance beyond the semi-finals. "I almost hit the wall and I'm glad it finished in two sets. It was almost impossible to play."

I made less mistakes than Petr did. That was the difference. There was only one break off serve in the entire match, and that came in the opening game when Korda struck his second double-



Patrick Rafter

fault. Kafelnikov, who had conceded just five points on serve in the first set, faced two break points with Korda leading 1-0 in the second, but held off the challenge. Korda then held a set point at 6-5, but the Russian fired a service winner.

Korda hit 10 aces, one at a very modest 75 mph (120

kph). He also saved seven of eight break points, but failed to convert any of the three he held and paid a heavy price for his stuttering start.

"I wish I could start the match again and not hit the double-fault, but I did the best I could today. I felt if I could hold him in the second set and win it I could do something, because he

was struggling too," Korda added.

Rafter and Rusedski battled in vastly different conditions, playing on a refreshingly cool evening after rain.

Although only one break of serve settled each set, the outcome revolved largely around the final game of the first set, during which Rusedski was called for a foot fault three times.

He became frustrated and rolled a ball in the direction of the offending linesperson, for which he received a warning for unsportsmanlike conduct. Rafter went on to win the game, and the set, with a forehand down the line.

The Australian seemed to sit back after that and lost the rhythm on both his

serve and volleys, and Rusedski broke to lead 1-0 with a return off a second serve. That was enough to level the match, but Rusedski struck three double faults in the final set to fall behind 2-0 and could not recover.

Rafter, who will be trying for his first title this year after reaching three previous finals, was grateful for Rusedski's distraction. But he was also delighted at his own form and claimed he is playing as well now as at any stage this year.

"I served very well and was very confident on my returns. There was a big sense of relief though when I broke him in the third, and he started to lose it a little bit mentally then," said Rafter.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HUSSEIN

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 47 ♠ 10 8 6 5 4 ♣ Q J 2 ♠ Q J 2
- Partner opens the bidding with two no trump. What do you bid now?
- Q. 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- 4 ♠ 10 8 5 ♠ A 10 6 ♣ A J 8 7 4
- The bidding has proceeded:
- WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
- 10 Pass 1NT ?
- What action do you take?
- Q. 3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- 4 ♠ Q J 2 ♠ Q J 10 2 ♣ A Q 10 6 4 2
- The bidding has proceeded:
- NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
- 14 Pass 1NT Pass
- 10 Pass ? ?
- What do you bid now?
- Q. 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 4 ♠ 8 5 2 ♠ Q A K 9 7 4 3 ♠ A 8 6
- Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
- Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- 4 ♠ 9 7 6 5 3 ♠ Q J 2 ♣ K 9 5 ♠ 4 5
- The bidding has proceeded:
- WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
- 10 DM 17 ?
- What action do you take?
- Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 4 ♠ J 6 3 ♠ K J 8 4 ♣ 8 5 ♠ A 8 6
- The bidding has proceeded:
- NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
- 14 Pass 17 Pass
- 10 Pass ? ?
- What do you bid now?
- Look for answers on Monday.

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Controversy resurfaces in Israel on alleged theft of Yemenite children

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Decades-old allegations of a stolen baby racket in Israel involving Jewish immigrants from Yemen resurfaced Sunday after an alleged discovery that four graves thought to hold dead Yemeni newborns were empty.

Since some 43,000 Yemenite Jews emigrated to the newly created state of Israel around 1950, Yemenite activists have regularly charged that hundreds of babies officially declared dead were actually given to adoptive parents of European descent.

The allegations have added to the difficult relations between European and Middle Eastern Jews in Israel and are expected to gain attention as Israel reflects on its past in the runup to celebrations next year of the 50th anniversary of Israel's creation.

The issue resurfaced over the weekend when Israeli television broadcast a video

showing the excavation last week by an official investigation commission of four graves at Tel Aviv's Givat Shaul cemetery which were supposed to hold the remains of dead Yemenite children.

With relatives of the babies present, investigators opened the graves and found them empty. Wooden signs over the graves bore the names of Ruthie Babu, Ruthie Cohen, Reuven Rafaleo and Moshe Mishrahi.

"There was nothing in the graves, no remains, just sand, sand and more sand," the mother of one of the infants, Ruthie Rafalov, said.

Ms. Rafalov and other parents said the children were hospitalised more than 40 years ago when just a few months old. The hospital later informed them that the babies had died, but they never produced their bodies or any death certificates, they said.

Health officials at the time said the crush of new Yemenite immigrants, who were housed in chaotic tent camps, made it impossible to fully account for all of the sickly children who died in the first months after their arrival.

The government has appointed two commissions to investigate claims that Yemenite babies were stolen and put up for adoption, but of 3,000 adoptions recorded during the period, only 40 cases were considered suspicious enough to merit further study.

The director of the Abu Kabir forensics institute in Tel Aviv, Yehuda Heath, also challenged the conclusions drawn from what he called the "superficial exhumations" carried out at Givat Shaul.

"This proves nothing since the bones of newborns are exceedingly fragile and could have disintegrated or been displaced naturally over the years," he said.

The campaign to reveal the fates of up to 5,000 missing Yemenite children has been spearheaded by a radical, self-proclaimed Rabbi, Uzi Meshulam, who barricaded himself with a group of armed followers in a Tel Aviv house for six weeks in 1994 to press the government into action.

One of his followers was killed in a shootout with police and Meshulam is currently serving a prison term in connection with the incident.

According to Israeli press reports, a U.S. citizen, Tzila Levine, is currently in Israel claiming that she was one of the stolen Yemenite babies put up for adoption.

Ms. Levine told reporters that the adoptive mother gave her documents admitting that she had been kidnapped in 1949 and put up for adoption.

Ms. Levine said she was hunting for her natural parents and hoped genetic testing could help find them.

Israeli court rejects pig poster suspect's appeal

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's high court on Sunday rejected an appeal for release from detention by an Israeli woman who provoked Arab riots in Hebron by pasting posters depicting the Prophet Mohammad as a pig.

A court spokesman told Reuters that Tatiana Susskind, 26, had appealed to go free during her trial.

"The court rejected her appeal she be set free until the end of legal proceedings against her," a court spokesman said.

"I feel hurt because I have been in detention for two

months already for things that fell within the boundaries of freedom of speech," Susskind, a supporter of the outlawed anti-Arab Kach movement, told Israel Radio.

"If our country is a Nazi state, then all right, I am prepared for them to hang me. So I should be hanged and then they can burn books," Susskind said.

Last week Susskind was declared mentally fit to stand trial for plastering the pig posters on storefronts in the Palestinian-ruled side of the West Bank city of Hebron in June. A lower

court had ordered her held until the end of her trial.

Susskind is accused of committing a racist act, harming religious sensitivities, supporting a terrorist group, and endangering life for stoning an Arab car. She could face a maximum jail sentence of 26 years if convicted.

The posters unleashed Muslim rage and anti-Israel protests in Hebron, a volatile town divided into Israeli and Palestinian sectors. Hebron is revered by Muslims and Jews as the burial place of the Biblical Abraham.

Few turn out to clean up Lebanon's coastline

BEIRUT (R) — Few people turned out Sunday for a one-day campaign to clean up Lebanon's badly polluted Mediterranean beaches.

Volunteers taking part in the campaign to clear the 210 kilometres shoreline of rubbish said they were bitterly disappointed at the poor turnout.

They had been hoping thousands would pitch in and help.

"I am shocked because we were expecting more than 25,000 people to take part, but it ended up with few tents here and there," said Elie Awn, leader of volunteer team at Nahr Al Mawt, east of Beirut.

"It's because people still do not feel that they are concerned in cleaning their shore," he added.

Environmental groups and other non-governmental bodies organised the campaign with sponsorship from the environment ministry and help from the embassies of several other Mediterranean countries in Lebanon.

"People are convinced that if they do clean the seashore today it will be full of garbage the next day," said Rania Korban, a volunteer at Ramlet Al Baida in west Beirut.

The court adjourned the hearing to Monday.



DIVA IN LEBANON: Spanish Diva Montserrat Caballe takes a break as she waits for technical problems to be resolved Sunday at the Beit Eddine festival in Lebanon (AFP photo)

Spanish diva thrills Lebanese audience

BEIRUT (AFP) — Spanish Diva Montserrat Caballe thrilled a Lebanese audience with a captivating performance at a 19th century palace perched on a cliff overlooking the green valleys southeast of Beirut.

The world-famous soprano performed a repertoire Saturday night mostly from Rossini, Puccini, Barberi and Massenet in Beit Eddine's open air great court, before a facade of candle-lit arched windows surrounded by a gallery of arcades.

She amused the audience by laying down on the maestro's podium during a 30-minute interruption caused by technical sound problems after singing her first

Aria. Ms. Caballe, accompanied by the Cairo Philharmonic Orchestra led by famous Spanish conductor Jose Collado, also sang duets with her daughter, soprano Montserrat Marti.

The audience gave a long standing ovation at the end of the show, and Ms. Caballe performed at least three encores to please the crowd.

The singer has thrilled audiences with a repertoire of over 100 operas in the world's greatest opera houses.

Ms. Caballe made her international breakthrough in 1965 when she was asked at short notice to learn the title role in

Donizetti's *Lucrèce Borgia* for a performance in Carnegie Hall. The New York audience gave her a 20-minute ovation after her first aria.

The soprano also performed at the opening ceremony of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic games — seen by two billion viewers worldwide — a song from a joint album with the late rock star Freddie Mercury.

Lebanon's seventh Beit Eddine arts festival from July 11 to August 30 also featured two joint concerts by U.S. jazz singer Dee Dee Bridgewater and soprano Wilhelmina Fernandez, who starred in the opera movie *"Diva"*.

Iran's Khatami journeys on road full of trouble

TEHRAN (R) — Iranian President Mohammad Khatami will have to fight hard against entrenched conservative opponents to sow economic and social reforms in the 18-year-old Islamic republic.

Analysts and diplomats said on Sunday Mr. Khatami faced stern political challenges, daunting economic problems and huge expectations — especially among Iranian youth and women — for social change.

"Everywhere he looks he must see trouble," said one Western diplomat in Tehran.

Earlier speculation that Mr. Khatami might be able to bring about major foreign policy changes — particularly with the United States — have faded as the conservatives and supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei have shown no signs of weakening their strong grip on foreign policy and the main institutions of government.

"Parliament and the conservatives generally is making it clear that he (Khatami) has to work with their consent...there is no way, they are saying, that the president can ignore their views," a diplomat said.

Mr. Khatami is expected to make an early strike at domestic reform with the appointment of vice presidents for women and youth affairs who will technically be in the cabinet but not subject to vetting by a conservative-led parliament.

In his first nationwide television broadcast last week, Mr.

Khatami called for the creation of formal political parties, an independent press and said attention should be paid to the problems of the young and women.

Mr. Khatami's first major contest since being sworn in as president on August 4 begins on Tuesday when Iran's majlis, or parliament, starts to scrutinise his 22 nominees for cabinet.

Getting his cabinet through is seen as vital to set the tone and the reforming potential of his four-year term.

Analysts said Mr. Khatami has already given way to conservative pressure over his appointments for intelligence, defence and foreign ministers.

Conservatives are expected to resist Mr. Khatami's appointments at the culture and interior ministries, two key posts that will be vital if Mr. Khatami is to deliver on his promises of more freedoms and a society based on the rules of democratic laws and civil rights.

"President Khatami has now taken a risk of nominating Abdullah Nouri for interior ministry, and Atollah Mohajerani for...ministry of culture," the Iran News reported on Sunday.

Mr. Mohajerani has become a lightning rod for conservative opponents for his support of direct talks with the United States in 1990. Under this criticism, the 43-year-old historian and vice-president under Rafsanjani, has felt it necessary to clarify his views on talks with Washington.

"Now the situation has changed and under current circumstances I reject even holding talks with the U.S.," Mohajerani told the official IRNA news agency.

Looming large over the factional infighting is the harsh reality of the Iranian economy which is afflicted by rampant inflation, profiteering and widespread unemployment.

Oil revenues — which form 40 per cent of total government revenue — are already running behind budget forecasts and the country's food supply situation is becoming worrisome.

Though the economy is growing at a healthy annual rate of four to five per cent and Tehran's foreign debts reined in, daily life for millions of Iranians remains a daily battle.

"Solving the economic crisis, especially high prices, is my main expectation of the president," said Hojjat, a 33-year-old metal workshop worker. Introducing more social changes and relaxing the intrusion of religious police in daily peoples' lives are also major hopes among Iran's young and women.

"I do not mind wearing the hejab (Islamic dress code). I do not really want satellite television. What I want is when I am in public I can talk to whoever I want to without intimidation from the police," said one young female Tehran worker. "I want them to leave me alone so I can relax when I'm at home, on holiday or walking through the streets," she said.

Lawyer contends Egyptian was tricked into confessing

CAIRO (AP) — The lawyer of an Israeli-Arab on trial for spying against Egypt argued Sunday that the Egyptian co-defendant was tricked by police into signing a confession.

Farid Deeb, the defence attorney for Israeli-Arab Azam Azam, said that if he could prove the Egyptian innocent, then his client would be proved innocent, too.

Azam and Emad Abdul Hamid Ismail, an Egyptian schoolteacher, were arrested late last year in the alleged spying conspiracy. Both have pleaded innocent.

Two Israeli-Arab women, Zahra Yousef Jreis and Mona Ahmad Shawahna, are being tried in absentia.

At Sunday's hearing, Mr. Deeb said that Ismail, who worked at a factory in Israel, had a relationship with Jreis. The lawyer said she had seduced him and that he had hoped to marry her.

Mr. Deeb said, however, that Ismail eventually grew suspicious of the woman was attempting to lure him to spy for Israel and went to Egyptian security officials.

Mr. Deeb cited police reports saying that Ismail was told that if he wrote

down what happened, he would be freed. But instead he was detained. The police reports were not made available to reporters.

Prosecutors have charged that the two women are Israeli agents who recruited Ismail to spy on Egypt.

Prosecutors say that Azam, who worked at a textile company near Cairo at the time of his arrest in November, allegedly gave Ismail women's underwear soaked in invisible ink to be used for writing secret messages to Israel.

The court adjourned the hearing to Monday.

A 'creature' fished out of sea remains in freezer with no interest from authorities

By P.V. Vivekanand
Special to the Jordan Times

BAHRAIN — It could be a sea monster, a rare species of fish, a creature from outer space, or a total hoax altogether.

But what Mohammad Yousef Obaid, a Kuwaiti municipal employee, fished out of the sea on a family outing a week ago is definitely strange.

Mr. Obaid, 35, says he found the creature floating face down in water. August 8, as he was fishing in the Al Fintas area of the Kuwaiti shoreline at around 11 p.m.

"First I thought it was a dead human body and wanted to call police," he recounts. "But then I thought let me determine for myself what it was and so I turned it face up with a stick."

"I was shocked to see that the creature, or whatever, had a strong resemblance to humans," says Obaid. "I could see that the body was disintegrating but could distinctly spot the strange skull, remnants of eyes, ears and mouth, spinal cord and

pelvis."

The creature could have been dead for about a week or more, according to Mr. Obaid, who adds that as he pulled the skeleton to the shore, it broke into three pieces. He took home the skull and spinal cord (which remained attached to each other) but the rest of the creature's body was missing when he went back to get it.

The skeleton is one and a half metres long; it has a big mouth, two nostrils, two eyes and two ears which jut out of the skull resembling a Chinese dragon or even the "devil" as portrayed by artists.

Mr. Obaid, a father of five, says he is keeping the skeleton in a deep freezer at home. "But it has turned black by now," he said Saturday. The municipal worker says he approached several research centres in Kuwait with the story, but "no one seemed to take me seriously."

"It is no hoax," swears Mr. Obaid. "I think it will be a big shame if such a rare find goes uninvestigated."



Arafat says Israel is 'Greater Micronesia'

NABLUS (R) —

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, his peace moves with Israel mired in deep crisis, referred to the Jewish state as the big brother of the scattered Pacific archipelago of Micronesia. The world responded [to new Israeli settlement in Arab east Jerusalem] in the United Nations by a majority of 134 to three countries: Micronesia, and America. Arafat said in a speech in the West Bank town of Nablus, counting the countries off on his fingers. The three nations to vote against an April 25 U.N. General Assembly resolution condemning Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's settlement policies were Micronesia, Israel and the United States.

Swedish kids eat their way into Guinness Book of World Records

SUNDSVALL, Sweden

(AFP) — Nearly 700 children from Sweden ate their way into the record books Saturday, chewing 5,000 metres of licorice cords in eight minutes and 25.75 seconds, organisers said. The 673 children, who beat the Guinness Book of World Records' time by 2.5 seconds, accomplished the feat during an outdoor fair in Sundsvall, in northern Sweden. Each child ate, on average, more than 7.4 metres of candy. Many of the children reportedly complained of stomachaches later.

Elvis lookalike runs 100 hits in 10 hours

PAWLISH, England (AFP)

— British Elvis Fan Gary Jay finally stopped singing late Saturday after rocking through 100 of the King's hits in 10 hours — reportedly breaking the world record for the feat. Holiday camp worker Jay, 33, claimed he earned a place in the record books for notching up 10 hours of singing hits like Blue Suede Shoes, Love Me Tender and You Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dog, beating the former record of seven-and-a-half hours set by U.S. singer Alvin Presley.

Bon Jovi, Stewart's heads almost melted

LONDON (AFP) — Two of

the hottest names in rock found things getting a little too warm for comfort Saturday as temperatures soared in what looks set to be one of the most sizzling British summers of the century. Organisers of a star-studded concert at London's Wembley Stadium had to pop the heads of rock legends Rod Stewart and Jon Bon Jovi in the fridge after their heads began to melt. The "stars" were actually waxworks borrowed from London's Rock Circus for the concert to accompany their real-life doubles, who were performing hits from 40 years of rock.

Andretti's new wine company is 'high octane'

WASHINGTON (AFP) —

Retired race car driver Mario Andretti has teamed up with a former top executive of a retail empire to form a wine company with high-octane plans. In January the Andretti wine group bought a 21-hectare winery in Napa Valley, northern California's famed grape-growing region. Andretti's Partner, ex-Kmart head Joe Antonini, says the partnership has its eye on other wineries with the goal of producing, marketing and mass-distributing premium wines such as Merlot, Sangiovese and Pinot Noir. The Andretti Wine Group sold 5,000 cases during the first half of this year, and another 10,000 cases are set to be bottled by next June.

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